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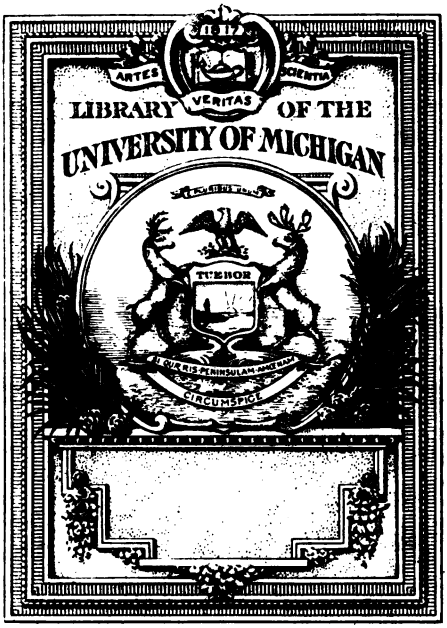
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Ashe, Thomas

MEMOIRS

AND

CONFESSIONS

OF

CAPTAIN ASHE,

AUTHOR OF

"THE SPIRIT OF THE BOOK,"

&c. &c. &c.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

"Rien n'est beau que le vrai,
"Le vrai seul est aimable."

VOL I.

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TO HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

AND THE

RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON.

© 10-21-43 SKV

My Lords,

The obligations, under which I lie to your Lordships, are of so transcendent a nature, as to demand the warmest and most public acknowledgments I can make; and at the same time suggest the propriety of the present address in so forcible a manner, as to preclude all hesitation and demur on the subject.

I am sensible it has been your Lordships' invariable rule to do good by

stealth, whenever practicable; and your caution in this respect often such as to defy discovery. It is always, I believe, your wish to avoid it, but it is always a rule with me to be grateful. As your hearts felt acutely for the sufferings related in my Memoirs, and as you advanced to me, from time to time, upwards of three hundred pounds for their alleviation, my heart glows with impatience to express its gratitude, and my pen is proud to proclaim that I know you to be a private as well as a public blessing to mankind.

I never was known to your Lordships personally. The unhappy circumstances of my life were my only introduction to you; and even in these you found the fatal effects of courage without conduct, genius without discretion, and greatness

of mind without integrity of principle; but these discoveries did not extinguish the fire of nature in your hearts, and you relieved me because you considered me a poor visionary, and the most pitiable object that ever was abandoned by fortune.

Your Lordships are not like those who want the bravery to do a generous action, for fear of being identified with misery and misconduct. Such, indeed, was your courage at the time you approached me, that I myself was confounded and astonished at it. The rest of the world had long abandoned me, and a conquest over my ungovernable nature was thought impracticable. It became fashionable to think, that I was a sort of wild beast which could neither be dragooned nor caressed into tameness; or that, if I some-

times appeared so, I was still to be shunned as an old lion in a cage, ever apt to leap into his natural wildness.

Thus, my Lords, while the cowardly part of my countrymen framed a pretence for neglect or flight, you, with a noble and generous spirit, fixed your eyes upon me, and enabled me to remove beyond the terror and cruelty, which had driven me from the pale of civilized man.—What the effect of your munificence and bravery may be is not for me to predict. I can only say, that I shall labour in solitude with undaunted fortitude to redeem my name from barbarity, and that none will pray more devoutly for your Lordships' happiness than

THOMAS ASHE.

Havre de Grace.

MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS

OF

THOMAS ASHE, Esq.

CHAP. I.

Mr. Ashe retires from the World.—He looks into the Mirror of Retrospection.—It reflects his past Life, and every Circumstance of his eventful History.

IN a portrait where the features are prominent and striking, where boldness of manner in some degree compensates for want of elegance, and where the ruggedness of the surface, though it betrays a neglect, yet strongly indicates the hand of a master, such a picture is frequently sought, and not much less esteemed, in the cabinets of the curious, than the finished productions of the most laborious artists.

The delineation of character may be allowed such an affinity to portrait painting, as to justify this allusion; especially when we attempt to sketch such a visionary as myself;—one, who endeavoured to be distinguished through life by a studied singularity of action and manner, utterly abhorrent from every thing that can be thought common-place: and by it I am indeed eminently distinguished.

But with all this singularity of manner, and with so much loud and pompous pretences to undeviating turpitude and folly, my mind is not formed of that vacillating stuff which never settles, or stops to attend to the voice which conveys satisfaction to the judgment, conviction to the understanding, and strength to the memory. Nor are its oscillations so rapid but that it may be struck by those arrows of conscience and remorse, which have a poignancy that is deeply felt, and a sting that sorely wounds.

In testimony of this, I have retired from the world, and with the full determination of employing my utmost ability, and the most sacred regard to truth, in writing the memoirs of my own life; so as to shew, that misery and destruction must finally await the man who neglects to cherish the great cause of reason and morality, and who learns not how to restrain his passions within the sway and command of religion, wisdom, and virtue.

Having such an end in view, I shall present my memoirs to the world; and, in them, I pledge myself to set forth the evils that resulted to me from the vices of my heart, as well as the incalculable advantages I often attained by the pursuit of objects which required a virtuous and cultivated mind. Above all, I shall draw a faithful picture of transactions that have either tended to debase my moral and intellectual character, or that have added lustre to my humble name.

I shall make no apology for introducing my life to the notice of the public, because my intention in doing so is good: therefore, if I unwittingly draw upon me the censure of that public, the reproach must, in justice, be attached to my head, and not to my heart, which now beats most fervently, in the general cause of human nature, and the best interests of my fellow-subjects in particular.

But if, amongst those who may peruse my life and actions, any shall be found, who waste their days and consume their nights in hanging over the dangerous productions that so profusely teem from the press, I must observe to these, that, notwithstanding fiction may be clothed in the magic garb of enchantment, and her many-coloured robes be decorated by the choicest ornaments of taste, yet it cannot steal upon the affections of the finely-organized heart, like the plain, unvarnished tale of awakened remorse, insulted genius, or neglected worth.

The power of fiction, when well wrought up, is indeed great over the generality of minds for a short time. The fairy forms of delusion seem to charm the senses of the infatuated votary, and beckon him on to new scenes of delight: but the gay visions are soon fled; the realities of life appear doubly loathsome to the vitiated mind; and it is then that the picture, which it has been contemplating with rapture, appears in its true and natural colours.

It is not thus with truth. The influence of truth increases in proportion to the cultivation of the mind, which it interests as much as it improves, at the same time that it increases the sources of virtuous pleasure and genuine happiness. I shall endeavour, notwithstanding, to render my plain matter of fact interesting to my readers, by as warm a glow of colouring as the subjects may admit of; and, as to the facts themselves, I believe it will be allowed, that, had I been bred and

nourished by the Florentine muses, in their sacred, solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of Gothic superstition, and, in all the dreariness of enchantment, they could not have been more magical or extraordinary.

Under this conviction, it is even the poor deluded votaries, the promiscuous worshippers of absurd fiction, whom I now call upon to forsake the flimsy decorations and outward glare of a fabric that contains nought but pollution of every kind, and endeavour to gain the Temple of Virtue, on whose high altar the pure and everlasting flame of knowledge and truth burns with ethereal splendour and never-fading lustre.

I call upon those, who have studied by the lamp which was lighted up by the mighty magician of the Mysteries of Udolpho, to read the memoirs of my life, and to raise up unto themselves a strong hold, even in the recesses of their own hearts, which no human power can

give or deprive them of. Let them mark my confessions; and contemplate my mind, at one time, as a vast and fruitful plain, a perfect paradise, yielding every joy and every blessing that the highest degree of nature's perfection can bestow, and, at another, as a desolated wilderness, across whose dreary waste no refreshing stream is seen to glide, nor any summer's sun to cheer by his enlivening rays.

It will be perceived that these states of mind accorded with the degree of attention paid to reason and virtue, or to the wanton mazes which invited the steps of the enthusiast.

I am under some apprehensions that many incidents, related in my life, may scarcely be credited by those who are unacquainted with similar vicissitudes and circumstances. I am under these apprehensions, because, in long struggling with the storms of fate, I have met with as wonderful occurrences, as hair-breadth

escapes, as shocking crimes, as those are in search of, who ransack the most popular romances of the age, for idle stories and the most improbable tales. Besides, my life is not a puny rill, fancifully disposed, and trimly decked for an hour of display; but it is a copious river, full, abundant, and tremendous; flowing with an uninterrupted stream of uncommon imagery and luminous figures, that hurries away the unwilling mind by the force of its current, and appals the mind rather than gains the admiration of the observer.

Whatever impression my memoirs may make, I assert, however, that truth alone is their foundation; for so singularly eventful has been my life, that I have no occasion to fly to the ebullitions of a distempered fancy for the purpose of filling my volumes, or affording the reader a temporary pleasure. A great many of the first characters in the church and the state, in the army and in the navy, know

me well: they are referred to in my pages—they will recognise my hints—and I dare them to deny any of those numerous transactions, in which they and I have been so frequently commixed and associated.

At all events, and under every circumstance, the diversified particulars of my life shall be related in an animated, yet natural style. The sensibility of the reader will be excited by the most simple and unaffected details of real occurrences; he will see me often oppressed, but never overpowered; and often prosperous, but never happy; because the principal ingredient of happiness does not lie in exterior circumstances, but in the inward honour and composure of the mind.

As this is the great maxim which my life lays down, there will be scarcely a page of my memoirs but must prove its important truth; while I shall, at the same time, shew that the best and most virtuous passion may border upon vice,

when carried too far, and when not directed by reason and piety. The enlightened reader will easily perceive that I have been a man of passions, and so strong, that they have sometimes transported me beyond the strict bounds of principle; but, at the same time, he will wonder how a man, amidst such a multitude of events, and such a variety of pressures, should always find resources in his own courage and superior audacity; extricating himself thereby out of difficulties, under which a man of less spirit and enterprise would have sunk into the oblivious pool of ignominy or contempt.

The moral that is conveyed in every incident of my life, is such as may be expected from a philosopher now totally withdrawn from the world; and I confidently hope that the relation of those incidents will be found a warning to the proud, a lesson to the unrelenting, a solace to the unfortunate, and a shield to the misguided.

CHAP. II.

The Author describes the Origin of his Family, and the Place of his Nativity—His Pencil is dipped in the Stream of Nature—He rejects all Assistance from Art—He exhibits the paternal Habitation—He illustrates the Noviciate of Life, by sketching the popular Characters and Customs of his early Contemporaries.

To rise into notoriety, unaided by the force of family connexions, or the intervention of those fortunate incidents which sometimes exalt the worthless, is ever honourable; as it marks the possession of superior abilities, and the due application of them to their proper ends —the attainment of personal merit, and the promotion of public good.

This has not been my lot; and yet my name has acquired that degree of publicity, which renders it of consequence to me and to thousands that I publish my memoirs. The world will, at least,

find in my history a melancholy proof, that a man may be wretched, though in the possession of all the advantages of birth and education, when his heart has not a favourable bias, or when he is addicted to feed upon dreams, and drink deep of the cup of illusion.

Both the circumstances of birth and education fell to my share. I descend from a family, eminent for producing several great men. My ancestors were, for many ages, possessed of an estate in Normandy: they held considerable employments under the kings of France; and upon the invasion of William, surnamed the Conqueror, the chief of the family followed his fortunes into England, and received as a reward for the success of his arms two estates; the one in Wiltshire, the other in Kent.

At the period above alluded to, the family name was Ashe A'Court; and to this day the proprietor of the Wiltshire estate is so designated. In process of

time, however, and on the multiplication of the family, the younger branches retained only the name of Ashe, and distinguished themselves so much under that simple signature, that a baronetcy was conferred on their principal—though it has not been claimed since the decease of the late Sir Thomas Ashe.

Thus far the family is traced from Normandy to England: we will now trace their footsteps to Ireland. From the date of the English establishment in Ireland, first effected, afterwards extended, finally secured, by domestic treachery and the foreign sword, there was, till the time of King William, no civil government. The king's deputies, and the deputies of the deputies, were strangers and soldiers, needy and tyrannical; their duty, conquest; their reward, plunder; their residence, an encampment; their administration, a campaign. This is all the history Ireland has to tell. Youth became age, and age sank into the grave

in silence and ignorance. For the glory of the country, nothing was achieved; for its improvement, nothing attempted. Almost fifteen centuries were almost a blank.

With one great exception. On this gloom, one luminary rose; and Ireland worshipped it with Persian idolatry. This luminary was William, in whose orbit my first Irish ancestor moved as a principal satellite. Attached to his master in England, fearing the reverse of his fortune in Ireland, and dazzled with the lustre of arms or the pride of fame, Lovet Ashe, the first of the name known in Ireland, commanded a troop of horse during the first campaign made by the king; and as his good fortune gave him several opportunities of distinguishing himself by courage and conduct, he soon found himself at the head of a regiment, and in possession of the esteem of both court and army.

At last Ireland was tranquil; in alle-

giance sullen, perhaps, but unbroken. As Lovet Ashe considered himself to be the only descendant of his family in that kingdom, he concluded that the respect he owed to his name ought to induce him to quit the camp, and assume a more settled state of life. With this intention, he petitioned his master for his dismission; and that prince, who never failed in generosity to his brave followers and supporters, having heard his motives, allowed him to retire, covered with honour, and with a grant of land, now worth three thousand pounds a-year, called Ashe-Grove, and lying in the most fertile part of the county of Tipperary.

I will not wade through the slough of an Irish pedigree. It answers every good purpose to know that my father descended from this distinguished hero, and that, in imitation of him, he commenced a career of arms; distinguished himself at the siege of Belle-Isle, and retired upon half-pay, on the establishment of the re-

giment of Rufane, with the reputation of being a humane man and a gallant soldier. Previously to the reduction of his regiment, he married Margaret Hickman, a co-heiress, whose estates lay in the county of Clare, to a considerable extent, and who was nearly allied to the Earl of Inchiquin, the Masseys, Stackpoles, Fitzgeralds, and other families of equal distinction and worth.

This union was productive of eleven children, of whom I am a third son. As I grew up, I experienced little attention from my father, but my mother neglected nothing that might contribute to my education; and I believe she had the satisfaction to observe that I answered the fondest expectations of her tender and generous heart. The novitiate of this instruction was at Glassniven, a village near Dublin, in which I was born on the fifteenth of July, 1770, and it continued under the paternal roof, at a country seat of my father's, called Asheville, near

Limerick, till it was found proper to send me to a public school in the year 1783.

It is not my intention to be too elaborate or diffuse. What I have said is not digression, it is instruction; justice to the dead, example to the living; it is a debt we owe, and the precept we should inculcate, to remember our parentage and our origin. Had I emulated the one, or thought on the other, I should have retained my own rank in society, and possessed a name that required not to be redeemed.

To speak with ease and elegance his native language, has ever been deemed one of the most indispensible requisites in a man of family, without which, ability was fruitless, and understanding obscured: and some of the most celebrated Romans, such as the Gracchi and Julius Cæsar, derived no small share of their fame from their superior excellence in that attainment, due to the early cares

of a venerable parent, and are said to have been educated "*Non tam in gremio quam in sermone matris.*"

Whether I aspired to emulate such noted names in the region of eloquence, I presume not to determine; but this I am proud to say, that the foundations of whatever fame I have acquired, as a public speaker or public writer, were laid in the rudimental instruction, and enlightened knowledge of one of the first of women, and certainly the very best of mothers.

I have said, that this early course of education was pursued at my father's country seat, remote from towns, and from the influence and example of polished or artificial life. It is essential that I revert to this circumstance, because it will be found to have a predominating power over many of the events which are to be recorded in these remarkable memoirs. The first impression, made upon my mind, was not traced in

the academies of the great, or under the porticoes of the learned, but gradually delineated on a mother's bosom, and confirmed by an intercourse with the simple inhabitants of the fields and villages, surrounding the paternal estate.

To convey to the English reader a just idea of the impression I have alluded to, it is incumbent on me here to touch on those popular characters and customs, which distinguish and disincline Ireland from England. Varieties have been sought in the national disposition, referable to the double origin of the people; but in vain; for however differing in rank, party, or ancestry, they bear the indelible mark of a common nativity.

Restless, yet indolent; shrewd and indiscreet; impetuous, impatient, and improvident; instinctively brave, thoughtlessly generous; quick to resent and to forgive offences, to form and renounce friendships; they will forgive injury rather than insult. Their country's good

they seldom, their own they carelessly, pursue; but the honour of both they eagerly vindicate. Oppression they have long borne, insolence never.

With genius they are profusely gifted; with judgment, sparingly. To acquire knowledge, they find more easy than to arrange and employ it. Inferior in vanity only to the French, and in wit superior even to the Italian, they are more able to give and more ready to receive amusement than instruction. In raillery and adulation they freely indulge, and without malignity or baseness. It is the singular temper of my countrymen, that they are prone equally to satirize and to praise, and patient alike to sarcasm and flattery.

Inclining to exaggerate, but not intending to deceive, you will applaud them rather for sincerity than truth. Accuracy is not the merit, nor duplicity the failing, of a lively but neglected and uncultivated people. Their passions lie on the sur-

face, unsheltered from irritation or notice: and cautious England is glad to recognize the Irish character only by these inconsistencies and errors, which her own government has produced or perpetuated.

In their domestic life, the gentry and traders differ from the English of equal rank, not in essentials but in modes. Here are less neatness and economy, more enjoyment and society. Emulative profusion is an Irish folly. The gentry would rival the nobility; the merchant affects to surpass, and the shopkeeper to approach, the splendour of the gentry. Hence, patrimonies are dilapidated; hence, capital is diverted from business to pleasure. The profit of one enterprize is not, as in England, embarked in another, but sunk in a villa or an equipage. The English trader bequeaths, the Irish enjoys; but his enjoyment is not often elegant, nor always secure.

Such are the popular characters and customs of those whom I was early des-

tined to imitate or observe. Nor was my observation confined to these. No favourite of my father, and glad to emancipate from the assiduous care and instruction of my mother, it was my delight to wander from home at every opportunity, to associate with the peasantry, and partake both of their pastime and their food. But what is the state or condition of the Irish peasant, and how was it likely to affect my manners and my mind?

The condition of the peasant was of late utterly, and is still almost barbarous. What the Romans found the Britons and Germans, the Britons found the Irish—and so left them. Neglect or degeneracy of the colonists, and obstinacy of the natives, have preserved, even to our day, living proofs of the veracity of Cæsar and Tacitus. As to this, many will affect to be incredulous—the Irish, lest it diminish the character of their country—the English, because it arraigns the wisdom and policy of their system.

But the experienced know it to be true, and the impartial will own it.

As I grew up, the hostility between my father and me encreased to such a degree, that on the smallest provocation I ran from home, and lived with the poor and the peasantry for weeks together. During these vagrant wanderings, my dwellings were of primitive and easy construction; the walls and floors of clay; the roof of sod or thatch; the rooms filthy and unfurnished. In the larger room, on a hearth, without grate or chimney, a scanty fire warmed rather by its smoke than its blaze, and discoloured what it warmed. Glazed windows there were none; the open door amply sufficed for light and air to me, who became careless of either. Furniture I neither had nor wanted, my food and its preparation being simple. Potatoes or oaten cakes, sour milk, and sometimes salted fish, constituted my general repast.

Directed by the customs of these

simple children of nature, my earliest amusements were polemical. Fighting was a pastime, which we seldom assembled without enjoying; not indeed with iron weapons, but with sticks and clubs, which young and old carried, and as frequently as skilfully used. When not driven by necessity to labour, my humble companions and hosts willingly consumed whole days in sloth, or as willingly employed them in riot. Strange diversity of nature, to love indolence and to hate quiet; to be reduced to slavery, but not yet to obedience!

The influence of a people so extravagantly gifted over a mind so young and susceptible as mine must be obvious to every observer of human nature. At the age of ten years, I had some endowments, considerable acquisitions, and transcendent arrogance. Bold and voluble in my speech, daring in my conduct, and fixed in my resolves, the stature of my mind overtopped my associates,

and collected upon me the eyes of all, the shafts of many. The tenderness of my age could not moderate my pride; though the dread of my father and the love of my mother seemed to temper it. But there was something in me that would be obeyed. My brothers fled, and my companions fell before my victorious and envied ascendency. To my mother I was amiable: to my father I was insolent; to my sisters, servants, and companions, I was faithful, generous, and kind. At this period my father sent me to school, and with the reputation of being an inconsistent, impudent, incorrigible character.

CHAP. III.

A School described.—He makes a Progress in Science, and shews some Sparks of Fancy.—His Ambition is to become the noblest Work of God, "an honest Man."—He completes his Education.—Returns Home.—Juvenile Indiscretions.—Ardency of Passion.—He quarrels with his Father.—Pays a Tribute to the Merits of his Mother.

THE necessity of curbing the loquacity of presuming youth, and of restraining the self-sufficient arrogance of babbling pertness, has been felt so forcibly, that some of the most celebrated legislative assemblies of antiquity allowed none of their members to speak, till they had attained the period of life, at which it might reasonably have been expected that these faulty excrescences of the mind would be either lopped off by experience of their hurtful nature, or eradicated by maturity of judgment.

The investigation of truth, or the elucidation of error, they did not conceive likely to be promoted by petulance puffed up with station, or overweaning confidence heightened by the servile flattery of dependants. Modesty, deference, and submissive regard to the dictates of hoary wisdom, were deemed the qualities most consonant to, and most becoming in the young; whilst their opposites both exposed to contempt and subjected to hatred.

Unacquainted with the modern practice of forcing frames, the ancients looked only for the constant productions of nature; and if at any time the mature juices and rich fruits of autumn appeared instead of the blossoms and the flowers of spring, they regarded them as prodigies to be admired, not as regular grants to be expected. The modern world has, in these respects, widely deviated from the sober maxims of antiquity; and some late instances of juvenile excellence seem

strongly to corroborate the justness of its decisions: but Foxes and Pitts are not every day born; and from the opinion I entertain of myself, I do not conceive that I thought myself equal to either of those gentlemen while at Eaton.

Yet had I not been more than three years under the tuition of Mr. Cheator of Clonmel, when, just bursting from the embryo shell, my first academic exhibitions were a pointed attack upon the erudition of my instructor and his disciples. So daring was my outset in the polemical field, and my succeeding campaigns were distinguished by similar deeds of hardihood; alike marked by a full confidence in my own superior powers, and a supercilious disregard of the learned, the dignified, and the venerable.

In manners, my preceptor was gentle; in mind, elegant; in intentions, pure; but in learning, hollow. To such a character I was too great an opposite to remain on terms of constant amity. We had

frequent contests: but victory was without triumph, and defeat without dejection. At length, however, I became too enlightened for my master; and he could teach me nothing more. My manner in consequence was insolent, assuming, and offensive; equally distant from the conciliating graciousness of ingenuous youth, and the commanding dignity of maturer years. It seemed formed to excite offence by a studied arrogance of character, for which abilities, even if they were possessed, would but poorly compensate.

It is not to be understood, from what I have observed, that I was by any means a prodigy of learning. On the contrary, I was a mere pretender; a superficial scholar, deficient in the stores of ancient and modern languages, and standing upon the vain presumption, that depth, solidity, and extent of information, are the natural products of a vigorous intellect, and not the exclusive gift of workshops and schools. Rhetoric and composition were

my favourite studies: but I was very far from perfection in either style. I shall describe my progress in these arts.

Sometimes aiming at grace in my action, the attempt was but seldom successful, as I had an awkward mode of carrying my person, and forming my attitude, that strongly counteracted my endeavours: energy and force came not into my design. As to my compositions, in argument I was diffuse and comprehensive, dilating every reason, and swelling every sentiment much beyond its just extent; labouring to give my tinsel all the expansion of gold: not often accurate, and at times sophistical; but in general adhering closely to the thesis without digressive flights, that might be supposed to spring from some sparks of fancy. My arrangement, had it been regular, might have been clear; or if methodical, it might have been luminous; but as it was completely bereft of these qualities, scarcely "darkness visible" pervaded it. I certainly knew

the rules of logic, but these I disdained to use, leaving such mechanical drudgery, to inferior spirits, whilst I was resolved—"to catch a grace beyond the power of art," and, without labour or application, pass for the standard of genius, and the master of the Belles Lettres.—In fine, at the expiration of three years, I left school with the reputation of being a fine scholar, and with my instructor's comment to my father, that there was little power of physiognomical divination wanted, to discover that I was no ordinary boy. For my own part, I prided myself on my spirit and integrity. If at so young an age I had framed to myself any line of conduct, it was, to be steady to the cause of truth, justice, and liberty; and by the whole tenor of my conduct to approve myself, what the poet truly calls the noblest work of the Creator,—"an honest man."

The most enviable conditions of humanity are not exempt from misery. Sad fugitives of an hour, that pass away like a

shadow, our first principles of life are neglected; and instead of labouring, by mutual acts of complacency and beneficence, to improve the unhappy lot, the whole is one universal state of warfare, where the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, are in eternal conflict.

This observation, which unfortunately applies so generally to the bulk of mankind, springs immediately out of my own particular example. On my return home from school, the conduct of my father towards me soon made my home a hell, and my existence a curse. But death has since canonized that father's bones, and it is fit that I cast the veil of oblivion over the grave that contains them. Let it suffice, that no juvenile indiscretions, no ardent impetuosity of passion, ever burst forth to prevent the success of his early plans; and that therefore a character, so contrary as mine, when coming in exact opposition to his, never failed to draw down upon me the whole collected bat-

tery of his persecuting resentment; and when once his choler was raised, it was an invariable maxim with him never to forgive. "*Inimicitiæ eternæ*," was his motto.

In the heat of these unnatural contests, the voice of my father rolled the thunder, but his tongue did not carry the convictions of a Demosthenes. To this I had the spirit to oppose a manner warm, and at times even vehement; indeed so vehement as to bring down upon me the severest personal correction; for although it evidently arose from the force of galled feelings, and the indignation of insulted reason, it was neither prudent nor filial; while it both diminished the weight and enfeebled the strength of my arguments, colouring with passion the sober dictates of truth.

I would fain extenuate what I cannot justify. The independence of my principles, combined with my instinctive antipathy and fixed abhorrence to a life of slavery and oppression, were not likely

to prove a necessary restriction to the tide of impetuous passions which so often flowed in my father's breast; a tide that hurried him along, at last, too far on its stormy current, and by which his peace was nearly wrecked. In a moment of heightened asperity, he inflicted on me so severe a chastisement, that my life was for some time despaired of. On my recovery, I refused to go into his presence, sending him this exact message:—"Tell my father, that, as long as I have a spark of life, I will dash defiance in the teeth of the minions of tyranny, and that the severest reproach on his life will be the purity of my own."

Directed by apprehension, or awed by such unconquerable resistance and audacity, my father came into the measure of separation, by forbidding me ever to come into his presence, or of dining at his table, till he thought of some profession proper for so desperate a villain, as he was pleased to call me.

I was now turned over to the entire care and observation of my mother, for whom I ever had the most unbounded veneration and love; and I prided myself much on the idea, that as I was the particular child, of the eleven, whom she herself nursed and reared, so I was the one who excited the still fonder emotions of her heart. The education of my mother was equal to her birth and fortune. One was great, not middling; the other set her far beyond dependence or humiliation. She was proud though affectionate;—demanding court from her superiors,—paying it to those beneath her.

Exalted in her nature, her manners were marked by a graceful humility. She submitted to the tyranny of my father with fortitude; but one saw that she was formed for a better fate, by her generous conduct and liberal principles.

Complaisance made occasional sacrifices to the society, which her retired situation exposed her to; but the stronger

influence of superior taste and genius withdrew her more frequently to a solitude, filled by her imagination with a world created for herself. Her's was a spirit finely, but too highly touched. She loved me, not more for being her son, than from the oppression which she found I had uniformly endured; and I loved her with all the grateful affection that sways the heart of one who considers himself on the father's part a neglected, on the mother's, a favourite, child.

To amuse my solitude, and inform my mind, this best of women procured me books from my father's library; and as they were principally well chosen, numerous, and select, I read them to much advantage, but with a passion bordering on enthusiasm. To prove to the reader the advantage and extent of my studies at that early period of my existence, I will refer him to my "LIBERAL CRITIC," where he will find a characteristic review, which I then formed, of all the books

I had perused. It comprehended the works of the most celebrated English writers since the reign of Queen Elizabeth, being the time that the English language came to any degree of perfection.

In this characteristic review, I am not conscious of having advanced much dullness to disgust, or any sentiment or opinion which may not be deduced from some general moral principle, and from some knowledge of taste and criticism. But I have not the vanity to think it exempted from errors and mistakes. Excellence in literary judgment requires such a combination of talents as seldom falls to the lot of youthful inexperience. Many allowances will, therefore, be made for an attempt in composition, wherein perfection must be allowed to be a rare and difficult attainment.

CHAP. IV.

Family Discussion on the Choice of a Profession.—Motives for rejecting the Pulpit and the Bar.—His Uncle's Opinion prevails; and he is allowed to become a Soldier.—His Father buys him a Commission in the Eighty-third Foot.—He shews a Disposition to become a Military Fop.—The Regiment is disbanded.—He is reduced to Half-pay.

When the offspring of illustrious houses are ambitious of distinguishing themselves in the world, we should ever be happy that their exertions were such as entitled them to receive the deserved meed of praise: and, as I was the third son of one of the most respectable families in the kingdom, few men, in that respect, had more claim to the public regard. But, though I wish to celebrate, I freely avow, that I am not inclined to flatter.

On my emancipation from school, my

conduct was strongly marked by that singularity of spirit which is liable to severe retorts, and is never safe from the severity of censure. In consequence of this, and of the animosity of my father towards me, he and my mother, with other members of the family, entered into an early and serious consultation, regarding my future destination in life.

I had an uncle, of the name of Dalton, in the church; I had a relation eminent in the law; and some obscure branches of the family had created an immense fortune by their success in trade. The pulpit, the bar, and the counting-house, therefore, were open to me, if my father had been desirous of seeing me shine in any of them. My own secret wishes were for the army; and in these I had been encouraged by the former profession of my father, to which he always entertained a bias; and by the example of my uncle, Captain Lovett Ashe, of the sixty-third regiment, than whom there was not a

man of more gallantry and spirit in the whole British army.

It was resolved, on my thirteenth birthday, that I should be admitted into the presence of my father, who would decide, by the advice of my friends, as to my future profession. Fearing that the determination might be against my own wishes, I expected the return of my own festival with little pleasure. The morning of that day was to me the most anxious and pensive I had ever known. The company assembled, and sat down to table. My uncle Lovett was of the party. When he drank to my health, he kindly took me by the hand, and asked whether I would not be a soldier.

I presumed not to make any direct reply. But my father answered that my future profession was hitherto not determined upon; though he had hopes that the advice of his friends would, in the conversation of that afternoon, fix the choice, both of himself and his son. In

the course of this conversation numerous were the opinions, but most of them adverse to the army. One said, that the university was safer, and a rich benefice better than the pay of a general officer; another, that the bar was the only fit scene for the exercise of such mixed talents as mine; while a third asserted that my ambition should have no higher aim than the situation of an honourable and successful merchant or trader.

Such were the prevailing opinions: and, as the conversation proceeded, every one offered new reasons in support of his own advice; while all, save my uncle, declared that no good could come of making me a soldier. With bows of apology to him, one urged the common poverty of mere soldiers of fortune; another descanted on their profligacy and dissipation. The captain heard all with smiling attention, and, as it seemed, perfectly without offence. Though my father earnestly requested to have his opinion, I know not whether he would have

been persuaded to utter it, if he had not remarked the solicitude with which my looks were turned upon him, and the air of dissatisfaction with which I seemed to hear the different advice of our other friends.

My uncle began by observing,—"You would surely be surprised, if I should hear all this advanced against my own profession—a profession that has been to me not at all an unfortunate one—yet refrain from saying a few words in its defence. But if experience had given me any reason to suspect that a military life is either less favourable to the culture of wisdom and virtue, or much more hopeless in the views of fortune, or greatly more insecure as to length of life, than any of the professions which you rather prefer to it; no little self-partiality should move me to say here, what might encourage any hasty enthusiasm, on the part of my nephew, for what his books have, no doubt, taught him to regard as the profession of heroes.

"You know," continued he, turning to my father, "that I was a poor younger son, and so idle and ignorant, that I had not a single merit to recommend me. You and the rest of my friends had lost all hopes of my ever turning out in life otherwise than shamefully and miserably, when I obtained an ensign's commission in the sixty-third regiment, then under orders for service in his Majesty's colonies of North America. With joy I embraced this change. I thought nothing could be happier than the gay rambling life of a soldier. I longed to visit distant countries; and of the danger of death, by a noxious climate, or an enemy's sword, I was so inconsiderate as to have little fear."

After this humble preamble, my uncle detailed the memoirs of his professional life, which are too well known to the world to be recorded here, and thus continued: "I have troubled you with the narrative of which I am myself the hero, in the hope

that it might, more effectually than aught else I had to say, remove some prejudices which you appear to have conceived against the active exercise of the military profession. A less promising youth than myself rarely entered the army. It was by the particular circumstances of my situation in the army that my character was gradually ameliorated. In my advancement, I had no advantages but those of common fortune, and a very small share of merit.

"In what other profession should I not have turned out worthless? In what other profession could I have risen so high, with so little interest? Nor are the chances of premature death so much more numerous, as people commonly imagine, in the army, than in the fields of civil employment. It is true, that the military profession is not without bad characters, any more than the other professions: but it possesses a large proportion of the noblest characters that have ever adorned

humanity. In almost every regimental mess, you shall meet with a greater proportion of men of genuine, not false, honour, of politeness the result of goodness of heart, and of enlarged intelligence, formed by converse with books and practice in the world, than is to be found in the same number of gentlemen thrown accidentally together, in almost any other situation of life. Not that I would send a young man into the army at all adventures; but, if he has a predilection for the military profession, why should that be violently resisted?"

My uncle's advice prevailed, and I was allowed to become a soldier.

Occupations are to be met with in society which impose duties arduous to execute, and expose to dangers alarming to encounter. When these duties are executed with knowledge and ability, and these dangers encountered with spirit and perseverance, they never fail to procure to the deserving individual the grateful thanks of the community.

Moreover, if the occupations are essential, not only to the honour and safety, but to the very existence of the state, the warmth of gratitude increases in proportion to the magnitude of its object, and the strong impulse of sentiment is confirmed by the deliberate sanction of reason. The military profession is evidently, in these kingdoms, one of that description; as, by its means, we have withstood a world in arms combined against us, and have risen superior to the arts and to the power of our foes.

Such were the observations which my father made to me on his presenting me with an ensign's commission in the eighty-third regiment of foot, and which he had purchased for me immediately on his determining that I should become a soldier. To these remarks my mother added: "My dear boy, distinguish yourself with an honour becoming the illustrious houses from whence you spring, as well as with a zeal and intrepidity that may reflect credit on your native

country. Above all, be governed by these principles—There is no condition of life so abject but that virtue and patience may soften and retrieve; nothing but merit can lay a solid foundation for happiness; and nothing is so valuable to man as sincerity and truth."

It is more than probable, that, at the time, I paid but little regard to these political and moral axioms. Infatuated with the ideas I entertained of the manners and habits of a military life, and having the best dispositions in the world to become a military fop, I thought of little else than of joining my regiment, which lay at Portsmouth, and under orders for his Majesty's East India service. At length the day of departure arrived—the day on which I must tear myself from my good mother, my dear sisters and brothers; from my home, and from every thing that, till then, had been dear to me.

Those, who possess a feeling heart, can

easily imagine the pathetic scene which took place when I parted from my mother. The pangs of separation were too bitter and acute for her tender heart to support, and she sunk into a chair near her in a state of torpid grief; whilst I, notwithstanding the assumed haughtiness of my nature, became wholly absorbed in my sorrow, and my violent throbs of anguish rendered me unable to speak the last melancholy adieu. To shorten this painful scene, I threw myself into the carriage that waited for me; where, after many ineffectual efforts, I received some ease in a copious flood of tears.

After an uninteresting journey of three days to Dublin, I had the mortification to learn, from my father's army agent, that, as the eighty-third regiment had been raised by contract for three years, or during the American war, the men, in consequence of the cessation of the war, had revolted, and refused to go out to India. Hence they were disbanded by

government, and the officers placed on the establishment of half-pay. This was a blow as severe as unexpected: and, to render its effects still more poignant, my father, who was the companion of my journey, declared that my uncle's advice should no longer prevail; for that, instead of a soldier, I should become a merchant.

CHAP. V.

He is sent to a Counting-house at Bourdeaux.—He studies Petrarch and Tibullus.—Manifests Symptoms of becoming an unsteady Man.—Melanie, the Daughter of his Employer, attracts his Attention.

It has been often and justly remarked, that the most brilliant characters in society are by no means the most respectable; that they glitter but to deceive, and shine but to mislead: that abilities, eloquence, and genius, are frequently accompanied by such meanness of mind and profligacy of principle, as depreciate their worth, and tarnish their lustre, whilst integrity of soul and rectitude of intention exalt the humblest talents, and dignify the weakest exertions.

Without having the arrogance to think that I was a brilliant character, endowed with abilities, eloquence, and genius,

still have I the vanity to conceive that the above paragraph will be considered as a very appropriate leader to the present chapter. I have already shewn that it was with the utmost consternation and grief I found my father come to the resolution of making a merchant, not a soldier of me. Nor had he formed this resolution long before he put it into immediate effect and operation. He had a relation at Bourdeaux in the wine trade, of the name of Martin, and with whom he corresponded. On this gentleman he prevailed to take me under his conduct. A ship that was destined for Bourdeaux received me on board, and in twenty days I was wafted to the golden shores and cloudless skies of France. There I was received, with great kindness and affection, into the house of Mr. Martin, than whom there was not a man of more wealth and principle in the Bourdeaux British factory.

I had not been more than four-and-

twenty hours under the care of this gentleman, before I felt a deep conviction that trade was not a pursuit adapted to one of my frame of mind; and time only served to confirm this early anticipation. I distinguished indeed and valued Mr. Martin's good qualities; but even his kindness could not aver that I had a single merit more to recommend me.

At the same time, my heart might not have been absolutely bad; and I had received the advantages of education for the culture of my understanding; but I had acquired no fixed habits of industry and virtue. My mind was not deeply enough impressed with any good principle. I supposed myself under no obligation to any thing which I did not like, while I liked nothing but boyish amusements, and the premature gratification of those passions of manhood, which were but just beginning to make themselves felt within me.

Mr. Martin soon discovered that there

was nothing to be made of one, so idle and uncomplying as I was, in the counting-house. But to give me a fairer trial, by withdrawing me from the dissolute and thoughtless companions I had collected around me at Bourdeaux, he sent me to his correspondents, Messieurs Gaudette and Raynaud of Marennes, a small town on the banks of the Charante, in the province of Saint Onge, with a desire that I might assist them in their correspondence, as well as learn the French and other languages useful to persons carrying on a general and extensive trade.

I was placed then with Messieurs Gaudette and Raynaud; and being there my own master, free from all inspection and controul, I never bestowed a thought on business. If I appeared to be occupied in the counting-house, that occupation consisted in rendering Petrarch, Colardeau, Metastasio, &c. into English prose or verse. But as Marennes was too simple and too small a place for dissipa-

tion or licentiousness, I fortunately did not run into those vices and follies which marked my conduct at Bourdeaux, and which I still blush to recollect.—Thus circumstanced, and impatient under inactivity, I took frequent rides and walks in the vicinity of Marennes, and often joined in parties of fishing, shooting, and the chase.

From my earliest youth, a contemplation of the earth, its animals, vegetables, minerals, and other productions, however neglected by some parts of the community, was certainly a most entertaining disport and useful study to me. The glory of France, therefore, its mountains, woods, groves, and palaces; its seas, lakes, and rivers; its verdant landscapes, and numerous animals, could not fail of affording me occupation, or of attracting a principal share of my admiration and regard. Were I able to take in, at one view, the compass and the beauties of the banks of the Charante, I would eagerly

seize my pallet and pencil, and finish the grandest picture that man ever beheld. As an artist, I should be honoured by kings. My picture would be sublime and beautiful. The liveliest pleasure would be excited in the spectators, and every soul would be filled with a sense of, and a reverence for that Almighty Being, who said, "Let the waters of the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so."

I may here venture to assert that both my condition and my mind received more improvement from the contemplation of nature, during my stay at Marennes, than it ever did from my studies in the schools. I am convinced that the study of nature is of vast importance, and should be more particularly cultivated than it is. It abates a taste for frivolous amusements, prevents a tumult of the passions, and provides the mind with a nourishment which is salutary, by filling it with an object most worthy of its contemplations. Thus im-

pressed, I often walked abroad, and, in the language of the Poet and the heart, exclaimed,

> These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
> Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
> Thus wondrous fair. Thyself how wondrous then!

There are characters so generally flagitious, that the world will not give them credit for one good quality; but I certainly was not deficient in a love of God and of Nature, and that single virtue ought to expiate a number of sins. Happy should I be, were it in my power to extend my unaffected praises further; but truth is the basis of this work, and I must not depart from it.

Under the influence of my love for the works of God and the productions of Nature, I took frequent walks around Marennes, and was as often accompanied by Henrie, the eldest son of Mr. Gaudette. His aunt lived in a delightful villa on the banks of the Charante, and,

during one of our evening excursions, we agreed that it was to be the first resting-place we should make. On our arrival, an engaging, innocent, lovely figure, flew into the arms of Henrie. It was his sister, whose name was Melanie, and who was bred and educated under the immediate eye of Madame, his aunt.

Henrie embraced his sister, and I was interested in her from the tenderness she displayed, which forced me to reflect, how enviable would be the man, who should excite the still fonder emotions of her heart. After taking some refreshment, a proposition for walking was made. The evening was unusually beautiful, the road romantically recluse, and so serpentine as never to be visible beyond a hundred yards. The nightingales were singing in the adjoining woods. The road was also bordered with lofty hedges, intermingled with fruit trees, and even vines in full bearing. Indeed, I know of no scenery in England so rich and beautiful;

and the peasantry, we frequently met with, reminded me very forcibly of the figures I had seen in the landscape pictures of the best Italian and French artists.

The conversation of the ladies was very pleasing and intelligent. On the first opportunity, I confined that of the innocent Melanie to myself, by proffering her my arm, and wandering, at times, beyond or around our little party. I had now nothing more to seek for: this was an indulgence which filled me with the most inexpressible pleasure. I seemed to float without obstruction on the stream of life, and left myself entirely to the wind and tide of fortune. Melanie was then in the fifteenth year of her age; and seemed the loveliest female form I had ever beheld. In short, I felt for her all the impetuous passion that first sways an ungoverned boyish heart.

I was then in the hey-day of youth, of a remarkably tall person; learning to possess some insinuation of address, and

to unite the acquirements of the scholar with the manners of a perfect gentleman. During my walk, I made no secret to Melanie of my admiration for her, and was coxcomb enough to think that I easily read in her eyes some favourable sentiments in her heart towards me. On the termination of our walk, the aunt gave me a general invitation to her charming villa. I profited by her goodness as often as I could with propriety, and without being thought intrusive to so amiable a family.

Many weeks and even months had elapsed, ere my tender assiduities were able to obtain any manner of indulgence from this interesting girl; but at length they appeared to have some effect, and she became pleased with the constant attentions she received from me. Indeed, they soon began to make a very sensible impression upon her susceptible heart, which, notwithstanding her endeavours to destroy it, gained strength daily; yet

she had sufficient command over herself to prevent this prepossession in my favour being noticed by me, save that she would sometimes steal upon me looks of tenderness, from which I was presumptuous enough to infer that my love was already returned.

My attentions were indeed particularly marked towards her, and she, who had never before received any of these peculiar tokens of regard, imagined they proceeded from the pure dictates of affection, and not from mere gallantry. At the first moment, admiration must have been the sole motive of my conduct, but it eventually gave place to one of a more tender nature. In the course of my visits, I frequently read to her, played, and recited. Sometimes too I interested her feelings by anecdotes of my family, my country, and myself, doing all that lay in my power to amuse her. These attentions, although in themselves trifling, served to increase the flame that burned

in the soft bosom of Melanie, which gradually took possession of her whole soul, and which she never afterwards could eradicate.

With my gratitude and respect for the father of Melanie, and my admiration for herself, it was impossible to entertain any idea hostile to their honour and happiness; yet marriage was an event that I could not, in the smallest degree, prevail upon myself to contemplate. I would have died sooner than marry, and I would have died sooner than attempt to destroy the virtue of one, who was the chief pride and felicity of her family. For a considerable time I persisted in that struggle against passion, which honour, truth, and gratitude, appeared to demand; nay, mistrustful of my fortitude, had resolved to discontinue my visits to Madame Florincourt, the aunt of Melanie.

At length I was compelled to go thither, in company with her father and other relatives. On my entrance, I was sur-

prised to find that the charming girl did not appear as cheerful and lively as formerly. Her placid features evinced the serenity of her mind, but it still seemed to have lost its accustomed elasticity. Her animated eye no longer beamed with its usual intelligence; and the brilliant flashes of her wit were entirely fled, leaving her conversational powers deprived of their hitherto unrivalled charms. To me she was particularly distant and cold. Astonished and stung to the soul by a behaviour so unexpected, I begged her aunt would intercede for me, and endeavour to discover the cause of this sudden alteration.

My vanity was alarmed, my curiosity awakened. I renewed my visits; but several of them were wasted in vain attempts to wrest the fond secret from her tender bosom: nor was it till I portrayed my own passion in the most ardent and fervid colours, that I was capable of fixing any sentiment, or discovering the

cause of change in her character and temper. Her workings of mind now became strong, and did not pass unobserved by me. I saw a laboured thought; I saw that her soul was all mine. Her tears flowed as she disclosed her affection for me. I was at an age when joy is a storm of passion, not a habit of the soul. Like a storm did joy assail me; like a storm were its effects; nor did it subside till it wrecked the happiness and innocence of Melanie, and exposed me to all the horrors of a criminal and degenerate mind.

CHAP. VI.

He plants the Thorn of Love in the Bosom of the once innocent Melanie.—Through the Vista of Pleasure she sees the Habitation of Ruin and Remorse.—He trembles.—He feeds the deluded girl with Dreams.—She drinks deep of the Cup of Illusion.—She becomes pregnant, and predicts all the Horrors of her future Destiny.

WHEN a character is distinguished by the amiable qualities of humanity, benevolence, friendship, and liberality, those *leniores animæ virtutes*, as Cicero calls them, their natural and necessary effect is to captivate the affections of mankind: but when they are united with the vices of dissipation, and that false honour which aspires to fame by immoral actions, affection is soon destroyed, and converted into a contempt, which the lapse of time only increases.

This is not the language of a mere speculative moralist, but of a man of deep

and highly purchased experience. Previously to my unfortunate intimacy with the once lovely Melanie, I stood considerably high in the public opinion; and, notwithstanding the little regard I paid to business, I gradually gained the esteem of her father, and the friendship of his associate, Monsieur Raynaud.

M. Gaudette, the father of Melanie, was not only a good man, a liberal and eminent merchant, but he had an enthusiasm for his pursuit, which taught him to regard it as, of all schools, the best for forming good and honest men, and made him still cherish in his own breast the most passionate desire to attain, not so much its most splendid profits and emoluments, as its most consummate excellence in qualities and habits. He loved me, he said, because he did me the honour of believing that my heart was good; and because he was of opinion, that he, who was in his early youth the most dissipated and unthinking, would

become, through time and reflection, the most amiable man, and the most sincere friend.

I continued in so much favour, that he did not, as with the other young men, coldly slight my further intimate acquaintance, but delighted to make me his frequent companion, introducing me to the whole of his family as a young Englishman, whose talents and merit had engaged his warmest esteem. In one of his confidential conversations, this excellent man at length opened his heart to me. He had observed, he said, my growing affection for his daughter: it was what he from the first desired; but he had wished to make trial of my honour and constancy, in an instance, above all others, the most difficult; and, as he was well assured that I had not disappointed his wishes, no reward should be wanting to me, which it was in his power to bestow.

"Yet," added he, "I will never be so much your enemy, as to wish you to

desert your country for the sake of your love, without your family's full consent. My daughter is very young, and you are not old. I will take you as a partner into our house, and you will catch a portion of our mercantile spirit. You shall write to your father for his approbation, and then Melanie shall be your's."

As the good man ceased to speak, my heart sunk within me, and I could make no reply. I cannot paint the nature of my sensations. Unless such have been felt, they are not to be conceived. My heart was filled, agitated, softened. Beauty, grace, and goodness, had been at my disposition: sympathy attracted, to the amiable possessor, my first notice, my fixed attentions; and I was hurried on, by circumstances,—by fate,—by madness—to involve her in a state of inexplicable wretchedness.

Despair, mingled with the most acute anguish, for some time operated in so forcible a manner on my mind as to

prevent me from forming any direct plan for the government of my future conduct. Absorbed in reflections on the past and the present condition of the much injured girl, I knew not what to say, what to do, or what to think. When I reviewed the past, and thought of the day I first beheld her, how delightful, yet how grievous was the recollection! At the instant she appeared, I was most forcibly struck with the uncommon beauty and elegance of her form. Her person was of the middle stature, and framed in so exquisite a mould, that all her motions were distinguished by their peculiar grace and captivating symmetry. Her features were most exquisitely soft. The countenance exhibited the bewitching characters of a Grecian beauty, and her large dark eyes, sparkling through their dewy lustre, kindled strange and impetuous sensations in the mind of the enraptured beholder. The bloom of her youth was high and florid, but its glow was in some

degree tempered by the uncommon mildness and piety of heart, which beamed softly through her soul-speaking eyes.

But, alas! when I thought of the condition to which I had reduced her, what a sad reverse had I to contemplate! Her lovely countenance was now overspread by a melancholy sadness; her mind was evidently borne down by a heavy load of grief, and she spent most of her time in solitude; seldom appearing amongst the company which frequented her aunt's house, who severally felt the loss of her interesting society. Ill-fated Melanie! Remorse and grief had taken up their abode in that bosom which was once the seat of innocent delight, but which was now ready to burst with agony, as she sued for a lover's mercy. She was ruined—the bloom of her innocence faded. She was as a fair garden laid waste, whose verdure was gone, never again to return. Her early blossom had been trampled on by me; but yet was

her soul untainted. That indeed was very far beyond my polluted touch. I had no power but over the poor frail body, and it was for this alone she feared.

Such, and similar were the sentiments that agitated my mind, immediately after my conversation with the good and generous father of the angelic Melanie. I saw her, however, repeatedly, and had no power to struggle against the sentiment she inspired. It carried me to her feet; it hurried me to her arms, though more than her ruin awaited me.

It is not surprising to see men, low and contemptible in their origin, labouring with assiduous diligence in the service of vice, and wasting the dregs of their life in sapping the foundations of a virtue, which they have neither hearts to love nor abilities to comprehend.

The meanness of such men's souls casts some shadow of apology over the baseness of their conduct, and their stupidity may be pleaded in bar of their

profligacy; for even the solar beam affects not the benighted eye-ball, and nothing, save self-interest, operates on hardened obduracy.

But if a similarity of behaviour is observable in those of exalted birth, and who should possess elevated minds; in those whose education has been liberal, and intercourse polished, astonishment and shame at once oppress us: astonishment at such a flagant perversion of moral conduct, and shame at such a deplorable instance of human weakness. We can neither view them with indulgence, nor regard them with pity. They may be beacons to deter, but cannot prove lights to direct our course.

Among this unhappy class of men I fear I shall be numbered by the reader, as I proceed in my narrative. I have said that I saw Melanie repeatedly; in public, because, from the day her father opened his heart to me, I was permitted to address her as her lover, and all was settled as prescribed; and in private, that

we might repose on each others bosom, and awake from dreams of ideal, to real but temporary happiness.

The mysterious conduct I was obliged to observe in these private visits, preserved to my vain and romantic heart all the variety, all the enchantment, of an ever-renewing passion; while the beauty, the fidelity, the taste, and the talents of the interesting Melanie, gave her all the attraction and ascendency of the mistress, which are so seldom combined with the obligations and forced observances said to be due towards a wife.

The lustre of these moments was, notwithstanding, often dimmed by the mists of doubt and fear. At one time, she would presage a change in my heart, and draw beautiful and melancholy visions; in which she would insist that I was already bound to her by the most solemn of all ties. At other times she would compare her simplicity with the polish of the English beauties, and declare her conviction that I meant to forsake her.

Then would the pensive lovely visionary melt into tears, and offer up her soul-subduing supplications that Heaven would avert such misery, or take her at once from earth.

More than three months from my first criminal intimacy elapsed in this manner, when Melanie sometimes imagined that she saw an inequality of conduct in me. In truth, she was often very long without seeing me at all. When with her, my conversations sometimes appeared mysterious; and her happiness so entirely depended upon me, that she could not be indifferent to such circumstances. She mentioned her anxiety to me at every meeting; and I appeared more confused than surprised. She became more and more uneasy. She began to apprehend that I should want steadiness to persevere in my attachment till the period prescribed. Her fears disturbed her mind, and occasioned those periods of heaviness and calamity which I have already noticed.

During one of my visits, I found her particularly heart-struck. I strove, by tenderness and attentions, to alleviate her grief, or to chase all fears from her timid mind. I even promised to repair my fault by marriage, and compensate, by future conduct, for the shame and ills which she dreaded that she was about to suffer. The hapless mourner, buried in profound torpor, seemed lost to a consciousness of her own existence. Unaffected by my presence, untouched by my tears and prayers to be noticed, nothing could raise her downcast eye. Her ear was deaf to every sound—her heart lost to every sensation.

This most melancholy, most wretched spectacle, was finally interrupted by her accusing me of duplicity, and softly complaining that she was pregnant of a being, whose birth she could never boast; whose name she could never acknowledge; adding, that she could no longer conceal the misfortune which her attachment to me

had brought upon her. Wounded by appearances that would destroy her reputation, the expected mother of a child whom no father dared to claim, she saw herself in the direct path of being suspected, despised, and avoided. This preyed upon her sensibility, and made her suffer all the horrors of a distracted mind. I live to confess her situation, and to deserve the feelings that now make her memory an adder's poison to my heart.

CHAP. VII.

The Brother of Melanie challenges the Seducer.—The Seducer conquers.—The ill-fated Melanie forfeits all her Happiness and all her Hopes.—He leaves her Father's House.—Remorse follows the Consummation of the guilty Passion.—It arrives too late.—Melanie dies.—Her Father commits her Seducer to Prison.

PROSTITUTION of talents and mental advantages, though often amply paid for, is ever a melancholy object, humbling to the pride of genius, and degrading to the loftiness of abilities; as it shews but too plainly to what meanness the one will descend, and to what drudgery the other will submit.

It is also one of those faults that a man cannot conceal from himself; the same sensibility of soul, which gives their first merit to mental exertions, causing him forcibly to feel the impropriety of wrong, and the turpitude of base actions.

Alas! I could not conceal from myself the injuries I had inflicted upon the heart and mind of the gentle, suffering Melanie. I could not conceal them; and I promised most solemnly to make her amends, by obtaining her father's consent to marry her, previously to the public discovery of her existing circumstances and condition.

On this assurance, her pangs appeared to be considerably alleviated, if not removed by the soothing delight, which her wounded heart experienced in comtemplating the happy continuance of reputation and fame. All the lively feelings of pristine innocence were awakened in her bosom. Days of joy and bliss dawned upon her glowing fancy; and whilst she pressed me to her bosom, throbbing with new and silent ecstacy, her sorrows retired to a distance, and years of transport opened to her view, in the delightful task of domestic pursuits—in rearing and educating the expected dear and tender object of her care.

Alas! alas! she knew not of the days of sorrow that were yet in store for her. Her dreams of happiness were as fleeting as the beams of a clouded sun. Her secret, first discovered by her aunt, was not long concealed. All the friends of the unhappy girl were made acquainted with it, and the most powerful of her relations endeavoured to prevail upon me, first by caresses, and afterwards by threats, to make atonement by marrying Melanie immediately. I know not how far I might have yielded to friendly interposition; but the instant a system of terror or menace was displayed, I obstinately refused to hear the parties, and made preparations to proceed to Bourdeaux from Marennes.

Many days had not elapsed after the first discovery, and my disregard to compulsive measures, when the poor unbefriended distracted girl was torn from the arms of her aunt, and sent to a distance, she knew not whither; and this was done by her

cruel and callous-hearted relatives. The poignancy of her grief, and the acuteness of her sufferings, can scarcely be imagined, much less described. Reader! picture to yourself a young and beautiful girl, already nearly borne down by a heavy load of grief, prostrate on the earth before her unfeeling parents, uttering accents of woe, that might have softened the heart of the most atrocious villain, asking only for that liberty which nature had given her, and which no human being had a right to deprive her of.

But it was in vain she implored, raved, and tore her beautiful hair: her prayers and convulsions were equally disregarded by the brutal wretches around her, who could not pity, because they could not feel. Dreadful indeed is the want of feeling. Men that are destitute of this principal charm and ornament of the human mind, are sunk below the level of the bestial herd that range the forests, or dwell on the mountain's brow; for these

feel the strong affections of nature, and instinctively obey their impulse; but the man who is devoid of the finer feelings of the heart, is always obdurate, cruel, and savage.

And where were those finer feelings of *my* heart at the time I first injured, and next saw this lovely girl dragged from her home, in order to hide her own dishonour, and the wounded pride of her numerous relatives? Was I totally destitute of those intellectual qualities which constitute the chief excellence of man, or was I a savage, who wished to wound deeper and deeper, and annihilate what I should cherish and restore? No, heaven be praised! But my fate was indeed bitter. I was forced to act as I did, I was forced to wound the hearts of the innocent. Time was not given for entreaty; and I could not yield to violence. Some must be victims, though none deserved to be so.—Would that I alone had expiated my fault—would that my tortures had screened a whole family from disgrace!

"I have stained the innocent," exclaimed I, before I departed from Marennes. This short confession, strengthened by the above sentiments, and above all, the impropriety of leaving Marennes till the return of Monsieur Gaudette's eldest son, who, it was loudly said, would wash away the stain on his family by the blood of the perpetrator, induced me not to depart for Bourdeaux till my error might be atoned for, or the cup of calamity filled to the brim.

Henrie, the senior son, and brother of Melanie, soon returned: and the morning after his arrival, I was obliged to attend his challenge, for having dishonoured his family; such being the language of his invitation. We fought with our swords, and I easily conquered him, though not without myself receiving a dangerous wound. I know not that I ever endured a more fearful perturbation of mind, than on the evening between the challenge and our encounter, and during those few mo-

ments which passed after our combat, before the life of my antagonist was pronounced by the surgeon to be no longer in danger. After this event—that is the day of menace over—I resolved that the ill-fated Melanie should not lose her happiness in this world, by the generous sacrifice she made.

Honesty of intention, though it ought undoubtedly to form the ground-work of a character, is yet not the only quality that constitutes its worth ; for there are others as essential in their nature, and more rare in their existence.

It is a necessary, and, I will allow, even an indispensable requisite in the constitution of a virtuous man; but still we have known ambition, vanity, and the lust of admiration, to compensate for its want, producing advantages to the individual, as great as could be hoped for from the utmost exertion of its powers.

Clearness of intellect, together with a liberal and comprehensive mind, are

qualifications as requisite to the due discharge of duty; and their deficiency, should they be defective, is neither so easily supplied, nor so obviously remedied: they may be aided by advice, but that advice may deceive; they may be assisted by instruction, but that instruction may be fallacious.

I formed the honest determination, as I have above stated, of atoning to Melanie for her sufferings, and of shewing that my heart was formed by rectitude, and was unawed by any voice, which dictated another language. But I was deficient as to intellect and comprehension in the execution of my design, and failed altogether in the so much wished for effects. The reader shall judge for himself.

Having obtained information that Melanie was placed under the conduct of a distant relative, who resided near La Rochelle, I hastily repaired to the place of her seclusion, and was admitted into her presence, on being announced as the

friend of Monsieur Gaudette.—I found her most painfully changed; she was thin, emaciated, but not inelegant; and she advanced to meet me with that precipitancy of gesture and humidity of eye, which proclaimed her early probation to sorrow, and too evidently shewed she had but just come from drinking deep of the waters of affliction.

I was above the affectation of tediousness in the relation of my designs, and hastily said every thing that might have flattered a mind less sanguine than her's with the hopes of success. To all this she made no reply. Sometimes the tears of apprehensive affection would start to her eye; but I as often wiped them off, and bade her hope, swearing that I would marry her, and that death alone should dissolve the nuptial tie. As I swore to this the last time, she looked on me for a moment; her cheeks grew pale as death—she seemed as if struck by his hand—she faintly uttered my name—and sunk mo-

tionless into my arms. Finding that she did not soon revive, I shrieked, and, with frantic horror, called for assistance: it arrived; but before I recovered from the first confusion of my mind, she was withdrawn from my presence; nor was it till two hours after that I was informed her life was in danger, from a contention of ideas, which caused a dreadful and sudden miscarriage.

I retired from this house of mourning; and looked upon myself as the wretch of despair, devoted to future hopeless misery. My mind could no longer disguise its feelings. "I have stained the innocent," exclaimed I again, "and I am denied the power of making reparation." My tears fell, I mourned in spirit, and strove to seek consolation in sleep; but though sleep did not visit me, I did find repose; and a strange influence, I know not how to describe or term it, stole over my mind. It was like the calm induced by an opiate, without its heaviness—a

stillness of heart, a quiet of limbs, a peacefulness of spirit, I had never known before.

Oh! what a scene did it forerun—perhaps prepared me the better to endure! —If there are guardian angels, who suggest to mortals holy inspirations on approaching awful trials of their minds, such a power then entered mine in kindly visitation. From this calm I was startled by a kind of struggling voice. A person called upon me by name—it was the father of the unfortunate Melanie. I arose alarmed; and saw him agitated by a convulsive motion; his countenance frantic, his eyes fixed upon me.

This sight pierced my very soul. I threw myself on my knees before him; I thought, with a pang of maddening remorse, on my conduct to his amiable daughter, which had thus deeply moved the feelings of the father, shaking his frail and feeble body. This deeply injured person paid no regard to my situation, till

he vociferated aloud: "Follow me." Awed and confounded, I hesitated to obey, when he seized my arm, and forcibly led me along I knew not whither. We at length arrived at the residence of Melanie. I followed my conductor in silent astonishment, until we reached her apartment, and even her bedside. The father stopped, and rolling his eyes on me, who trembled in fearful expectation, for some time continued to gaze upon me, when he silently drew down the sheet, and then in a voice that might have appalled a much more determined heart than mine, bade me look, look!—"Regardez, regardez."

I did so, and instantly saw the lifeless corpse of the once beautiful Melanie, the sweet girl I had seduced. A confused train of ideas rushed at once across my mind; and, overcome by my emotions, I was sinking under their weight, when the father again grasped me by the arm, and once more arrested my attention.

"Knowest thou that deeply injured person?" said he: "and now look upon me,—behold the most injured of all mankind. Look upon the father of those beloved beings, of whom thy consummate villany has deprived me. Wretched youth! didst thou imagine that every tie, which unites mankind together, was to be trampled upon at pleasure; that the throb of parental affection was to be annihilated; that the innocence and purity of a beloved and only daughter were to be blasted for ever; that an only son was to be swept away from society to which he was an honour, and from the arms of a fond parent by thy murderous hand; that every ray of hope and every prospect of happiness were at once to be extinguished in the breast of a deeply injured and heart-broken father?

"And all for what? Surely thou canst not be so lost to all sense of honour and virtue as to make thyself a pest of society, and a hideous monster in the eyes of

those who can alone be called men. Surely thou canst not, for one moment, suppose that thy godlike image, bearing the stamp of immortality, was given thee by the Great God for the dreadful purposes of increasing the evils of life, instead of employing the utmost power of thy united and cultivated talents in the great cause of virtue and knowledge, by which the perfectability of man is finally attained.

"Instead of laying a foundation for thy present and future happiness, and assisting, with the great lovers of science and literature, to remove the vast weight of evil that clogs up every path of life, and by the practice of virtue evincing its great objects, thou hast been guilty of the most diabolical crimes, and been the means of injuring many individuals in their dearest interests. Surely never was a father blessed in the possession of such children as I once could boast; but the glory of their morn was only permitted

to illumine the vast expanse of life in partial and fleeting splendour; their day-star was checked in its course ere it had reached the meridian, and was, alas! suddenly hurried to extinction by the furious whirlwind of passion, which at times is permitted by the just Disposer of events, to break forth from the dark and gloomy caves in which it has its abode, destroying the most noble of his works, or at once blasting all their hopes and golden dreams of happiness.

"But I feel I cannot survive so severe a stroke as the loss of my poor children, whom I fondly hoped to have been the support of my old age. My heart has received its mortal wound, and, ere it sinks to rest, and beats no more, I have only one object to accomplish, which will soon be done. Know, then, that I have procured an arrest against thee on a charge of seduction and murder, and that this very hour thou wilt be conveyed to a prison, from which there is no

escape,—where impenetrable gloom and unwholesome damps are never removed by the cheering rays of the sun, and where in horrid solitude there is no opportunity of committing those crimes, of which thou hast been guilty; but where thou wilt have leisure to review the injuries of those who never injured thee, and raise thy thoughts to the Deity whom thou hast so deeply offended.

"Yet thou must know that my beloved daughter fell by thy means. Look upon her. She is dead; and my heart bleeds when I remember that she died amidst the wreck and utter prostitution of all her charms. Ah! unfortunate stranger, the blood of my two children is on thy head, and I leave thee to thy fate."

In saying this, the distracted old man rung the bell with violence. Instantly three armed men rushed into the apartment, seized me, and bore me away in silence to the obscurest dungeon of a prison, from which no tidings of my fate ever seemed likely to transpire.

CHAP. VIII.

The Gloom of a Prison is darkened by the Terrors of Fancy.—Mr. Ashe is conscious of his Errors, but Reason refuses to regulate the Feelings of his Soul.—Description of a French Prison.—Visit of a Priest.—He rejects the Unction of the Holy Father.—Wars with him and Nature.—Disdains such relief.

No production, however small, ought to be held in contempt, provided it is found to contain any pleasing imagery, any useful instruction, or a display of any of the finer feelings of the heart; or provided it shews the good or bad tendency of the human passions and actions. Should any beneficial illustration or recital be found, that production is undoubtedly valuable to a certain degree, inasmuch as it is capable of producing good.

The reader will easily perceive by this preliminary paragraph, that I am fabri-

cating excuses for various amplifications and extraneous ornaments; but I beg him to be convinced, that these, if properly regulated, can alone give life, interest, and value to the memoirs of an individual. I shall, therefore, continue to employ an ardent imagination in the embellishment of my facts; to be guided by its dictates, whether it leads me to pour out the effusions of my mind in the exalted measure of rhetorical eloquence, or in the enthusiastic language of Arabian romance. But I again declare my determined adhesion to the sacred voice of truth. All I mean is, to array the nakedness of that truth with the garments of fancy; for, were I to state my facts without shewing the workings of mind which they gave birth to, they would infallibly be devoid of interest, and be like a body without a soul.

I now proceed to the very lamentable fact so recently adverted to; that is, my imprisonment, through the interposition

of the unhappy father of the once lovely and lost Melanie. But I was so affected and confounded by his terrible anathema against me, that I know not how I was conveyed to so horrible an abode. I scarcely even knew that I was there, till I found myself in a cold perspiration, and awakened from my stupor by the rattling of chains, and the noise of my keeper, who came to leave me some bread and water; after which he sullenly retired. On coming so far to myself, I can recollect that my demeanour was quiet, meek, composed—yet awfully sad. My work seemed accomplished: the fire of my eye was quenched in the dew of the deepest affliction: my beating, palpitating heart, exhausted by its late workings, sent forth smothered sighs of weariness. I sat still, with folded arms, as one dead. Indeed, I was in equal silence and obscurity; for what is imprisonment but a civil death? I sat still, revolving all that had passed, since the first shock of re-

morse and affliction had assailed my heart. The languor of pain (for my agitation had irritated my wound) at length subdued the conflicts of passion. Every power of my busy, restless mind seemed tamed by weakness and sorrow. Every affection was extinguished. Gratitude, family-love—all those powerfully actuating sentiments, that influenced me on former scenes and actions, had faded quite from my heart. I thought, with moody pleasure, of my wound; I saw it abridge my days, and rejoiced in the prospect that my release was at hand; for I felt my heart could endure no more.

The dreadful accidents that brought me to the prison, the promulgation of the circumstances, and the uncertainty of the event, combined to make my case desperate, and far beyond the palliations of prudence or the interventions of tenderness. In my heart no sources of composure could spring; for I was conscious of the criminality of my conduct, and

reason refused to regulate the feelings of the soul.

We make, however, rapid progress towards the eradication of evil, when we can truly lament its fatal effects. We must learn to feel, before we can be instrumental in the removal of any vice; though it is extremely difficult to convince a dissipated character, that misery is the certain consequence of vicious pursuits, and that happiness is the result only of a moral and honourable conduct.

I had learned to feel, and tears were at first my only language; but resolution, not tears, was at length necessary. I petitioned for strength of mind, and God bestowed it. Weak as I felt before, I rose, and hoped for the recovery of my liberty. My spirit swelled indignant at the imprisonment I sustained: I expostulated, but in vain. I had to remain one month immured, before I had notice of any legal proceedings, and was

incapable of fixing any sentiment, even that of pity, in any person's breast.

At the expiration of the month I was visited by a priest, who, on entering my cell, desired, in a tone of authority, that I would attend to him. I did so; and, looking in his face, saw his tidings—that I should never more communicate with the world; that this was to be my last scene on earth; and that it was fit I should confess my sins, with penitence and sorrow. I fell into this train of thought on perceiving the priest to be a friar of the Order of Mercy, a class of the French church, whose province it was to visit the prisons, and administer the last offices of the holy church to such criminals as were condemned, or expected to be condemned. And what hopes could I entertain of life in a strange country, in which there was no jury to give an unbiased verdict, and where the judge could be swayed more by the power of my enemy than by the equity of the cause?

The friar began with a Latin orison; a

kind of fervent suitable prayer for malefactors, or persons of demoniac minds. I was silent, I was stupid, while his voice resounded throughout the dungeon. When he ceased his solemn address, he led me to kneel at the foot of a little white marble shrine, bearing a diadem and cross, that stood silent and unlettered in one corner of my dreary abode.—He ordered me to kneel. I refused to obey. His voice trembled with passion. "How, miserable wretch!" cried he. "Are you then so devoted to vice, and violent corroding passions, as to despise this sacred emblem of hope and christianity? Do you refuse to be cheered by hope, by that religious hope which can alone replace in your aspiring and wicked nature those mental possessions, wrested from you by licentiousness? Must you be scourged, and compelled to solicit, at the foot of the cross, that immoveably virtuous principle which you so much require, and which the cross alone has the faculty to dispense?"

On uttering these words, he sought to

force me on my knees. With an effort of maddening impulse I cast him from me, and retired to a distant part of my cell. He followed, and looked at me—it was a look, which neither age nor time can ever erase from my memory. He was no longer a man, but a wild beast, and his whole face was distorted. But he had too deeply moved my soul with indignation, to retain the power of shaking my frail and feeble body. He perceived this, and the more violent passions of his heart were disguised under the sullen cloud of vengeance and hypocrisy, which now overspread his terrific countenance.

After a short pause, during which his eye was stedfastly fixed upon me, he drew a Bible from his pocket, and demanded of me, with more sarcasm than piety, whether I did not subscribe to that volume, and implicitly believe in its contents?—My mind was raised to the fever of action, and with the force of fever I moved and spoke. "No," exclaimed I, "no, I do

not subscribe to it, nor can I think it of divine authority, when I see it made the instrument of tyranny and abuse." "What then is the Bible?" vociferated this vestured demon. "It is a vast collection of different treatises," replied I. "The man, who holds the divine authority of one, may consider the other as merely human."—"How!" retorted he—"the Scripture then with you is not of divine origin, nor even one summary of doctrines regularly digested, in which a man cannot mistake his way?"—"No," interrupted I with equal elevation of voice, "but it is a most venerable, a most multifarious collection of the divine economy; a collection of infinite variety of cosmogony, theology, history, prophecy, morality, allegory, legislation, and ethics, carried through different books, by different authors, at different ages, for different ends and purposes."—I ceased to speak. The friar retained a stubborn silence for the space of a few moments; when, as,

if stung to the soul by my replies, he struck me to the earth with his Bible, and rapidly withdrew. As I rose, stunned from the blow, I felt at war with nature and affinity: they were enemies to me; and as such I sickened at their remembrance.

CHAP. IX.

The Day of Trial arrives.—Paroxysm of Feeling.—Ignorance adds her Chastisement.—He is restored to Freedom.—Quits France.—His Father refuses to see him.—He repairs to his Brother in Dublin.

However a writer of the day may despair of future fame, he ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though he cannot arrive at any eminent heights of excellence, he might keep himself harmless. He might take care to inform himself before he attempts to inform others, and exert the little influence, which he may have, for honest purposes.

So warmly do I admire these sentiments, that I have ever sought to keep them in my view; and whether I have to any purpose or not, my readers must by this time be able to judge. But so much prejudice is abroad in the land, that it is

extremely difficult to please a majority. If many men contemplate the same object, it is almost certain they will all regard it through different mediums, and consequently make it liable to all manner of interpretation. To vague opinions I cannot be amenable.

Governed by the integrity of this intention, I proceed in my memoirs after the manner and design with which they were first begun.—The scene, in which I found myself engaged, after the departure of the Holy Father, was too awful for tears; too wretched for uttered lamentation. Then came over my heart the memory of former times, and the recollection of Asheville, where I had known pure happiness in childhood. There my brothers had never been aught but brothers. There I had chased my smiling sisters, who lessened their speed through the trees, to let me enjoy the triumph of overtaking them. There I had a mother! How well I remembered her smiles, her

cures, and her embraces! There I had a father, respected and esteemed. There I had friends, who held me in their arms during infancy, lent themselves to my boyish ways, and bore with good humour my infant caprice. But in France, shame and reproach had overpowered me, had wrested from me all that was worth existing for. Besides, a judge without a jury might find me guilty, though my conscience could not confirm the decree.

However, I felt remorse; I felt my folly, my impetuous folly and imprudence; and was framing on this ground of torture and anxiety a variety of conjectures applicable to my melancholy condition, when I was conducted by a guard, without preface or previous intimation, before the public tribunal, which was then open for the trial of criminal causes. The judge was already seated as I entered. He was surrounded by the officers of his court; and all, from long habits of respect, appeared disposed

to execute his will without the smallest dissatisfaction or investigation.—The scene to me was awfully impressive and terrific; as I perceived that power, though it sometimes slept, was far from dead in my judge's breast. Though assisted by several men, eminent in legal talents and station, he finally decided on the merits of each case, and his decisions in general were less correct and merciful, than erroneous and bloody.

It came to my turn, and I was placed at the bar. I was in a dreadful paroxysm of feeling. Ignorance added her chastisements. My full heart swelled, and refused every comfort. Indignant tears dropped upon the bar, at which my sentence was to be received. When the charges against me were read by the court advocate, the principal witness was called. Oh! how can I paint his entry—his conduct; when, as a divinity, he dictated; from a seat like that of judgment, those testimonies to which I was to owe

my life and my liberty. His son he said had recovered from his wounds; and as he had learned, since my imprisonment, that it had been my intention, by marrying his daughter, whom I had seduced, to wipe away the stains which I had fixed upon his name, he would wave all further prosecution, and solicit my discharge.—Never was transition so great as this. Never was man more taken by surprise. Instead of a shameful penal sentence, the judge liberated me, with a few observations on the errors which caused me to be confined. As I left the court, my late prosecutor painted most feelingly the transition of my fate, ameliorated by expectations so different: he called upon my honour, my love for my family, my pity for himself, not to heap on my soul a sense of remorse by a repetition of my conduct. He shamed my selfishness. In short, he gave me no peace; he allowed me no moment to reflect: he carried me bound to his feet; he held me to the earth,

and trampled over my bleeding heart, till I almost cursed my fate that my life had been so far prolonged. When he had thus broken the very chords of my heart, he dismissed me, and bade me farewell for ever. I went trembling to the house of Monsieur Raynaud, where the fever of conflicting passions, resentments, and wishes, endangered my wretched life for some weeks. On my recovery I set off for Bourdeaux, but was not received under the roof of Mr. Martin: he conceived an invincible horror against my conduct, and instantly provided me with a passage home to my friends in Ireland.

The reader has now before him my whole French undertaking, and I hope he will find in it some palliation for the infirmities of my nature and temper. Excesses of feeling are misfortunes. They lead the weak to guilt, and even the wisest to trouble. We pray against hardness of heart: it is an evil; and may mine never be so defended from pain!

But be it my equal prayer that I may not again become so enervated by fictitious feelings, as to be unable to resist temptation. Above all, I shall pray heaven to defend me from the dangerous seductions of passion, clothed in the false drapery which the imaginations of men have made alluring. But let me quit this painful subject.

Mankind in general seem urged by a kind of instinct to pursue the natural bias of their genius, and, when happily not diverted from their course are most commonly observed to attain the favoured object of pursuit, with credit to themselves, and honour to their country.

Homer and Virgil would scarcely have attained superlative eminence, but as poets; Demosthenes and Cicero had probably been rivalled in any other pursuit but that of eloquence. The strong innate impulse of feeling suggested their respective paths, and they followed them with unerring steps to the very summit of the Temple of Fame.

The subject of these strictures, probably, could he retrace the first dawnings of youthful inclination, felt similar impulsive emotions. Like Wellington, he combatted almost in infancy on his native mountains, and anticipated those military laurels, which have since so profusely adorned that hero's brow.

Other views, nevertheless, under the influence of other guides, had, it seems, struck out for me a very different plan of life. I was destined, by the ill-judged election of my father, to a life of commerce in a foreign land, and the consequence was that I returned home in disgrace, to cause a prediction of my father, on my arrival, that he had lost all hopes of my ever turning out in life otherwise than shamefully and miserably.

Having adopted this opinion, he refused to see me; or to hold any manner of intercourse with me. "My early life," as he said, "shewed a disposition naturally profligate, and bent on pur-

suing, through every situation, my own selfish gratification, without regard to the distinctions between right and wrong, and without concern for the joys or sufferings of others." He stated that such conduct could not fail to render the perpetrator of it eternally miserable, and continually more and more so, in every scene of life: it would probably bring him to the end of his vices and crimes by a death at once shameful, terrible, and premature.

Such was my reception on my arrival in my native country. But although my heart was agonized by the most acute pangs, yet was I careful to conceal the strong emotions of my grief, till, as I ascended the last hill that overlooks the paternal habitation, then for ever shut against me, the recollection of my former happiness, rushing in full force upon my harassed mind, nearly overwhelmed me. In vain I strove to repress the tears that trickled fast down my faded cheek. The

scenes of all my early pastime were brought before my view, and with them the fond remembrance of my once spotless innocence, now for ever fled. I relapsed into an agony of tears, that seemed to subdue the remaining fortitude of my brother, who had been contemplating in silence the various agitations of my countenance.

It was my eldest brother, Jonathan. He was bred in the University of Dublin, and was at that time curate of Saint Andrews, one of the best churches in that city. He attended me to my father's house in quality of mediator, and on the unfortunate failure of his mission, took me with him to the capital, where his genius and character had procured him many friends, some of whom were high in power.—When he perceived my deep affliction, as I have just observed, he threw his arms round my neck, and conjured me by the affection I bore him to be more composed.

"We are now approaching my home," continued this good brother; "and let me beg of you not to add another pang to my wounded heart, by giving way to your sorrows. All may yet be well. Look up to the fountain of all goodness: your devotions will not be in vain, and the God of Mercies will send you consolation. Suffer your reason to gain its proper ascendency, and your misfortunes will retire to a distance, whilst new prospects of happiness will unfold themselves to your view."

This brotherly conduct roused my sleeping faculties to a sense of my far-fallen situation. I appeared, for a moment, willing to make an attempt to relinquish my vicious career, and, in no long time, to return again to my offended family with the affecting language of—"father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Such were the sentiments and feelings which marked

my career from Limerick to Dublin. But man has no permanency, and is certain of nothing except the wreck of his existence. Hope leads him on by the hand, and whispers delight to his soul; but sorrow marks him for her prey, and death consumes his vitality.

CHAP. X.

His Brother obtains for him an Appointment in the Castle of Dublin.—He commences his official Career under happier Auspices than he had reason to expect.—Becomes a Courtier, and betrays a Mind capable and flexible.—He wins the Esteem of the Officers of the Castle.—Vanity fills his Heart.

THIS life is but a vision. Happy are they who regard it as such, and benefit by its fleeting hours; for to those, the never-fading glories of immortality are in store. In the poet's words, "Men are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

Like the rest of thoughtless mankind, I had no sooner escaped from misery, and arrived in the haven of Dublin with my kind and generous brother, than a vision of fancy presented the brightest prospects of future happiness before my deluded

view. The youthful ardour of my imagination had painted the enjoyment of my new life in the most glowing colours; but an early night of darkness was already lowering upon my horizon, and the soul-inspiring influence of hope scarcely beamed through the gloom that pervaded my path, when my fate was again marked with darkness, doubt, and uncertainty.

I must now pass from anticipation to history. When I arrived in Dublin, Ireland was governed by His Excellency the Marquis of Buckingham, a nobleman who possessed such great and innumerable virtues, as justly entitled him to the highest favours of his sovereign, and rendered him a shining example to those who were hereafter destined to fill his exalted station. He was universally beloved by the Irish of all ranks and degrees. They united with one voice to proclaim his worth, declaring in that genuine simplicity so peculiar to the native Irish, that "when he died, he would go to his God."

To enlighten the minds of those deeply neglected Irish, the noble marquis appointed commissioners to enquire into the state of all the diocesan and endowed schools, and to report to him the total amount of the endowments, the manner of its appropriation, the number of free scholars, &c. &c. These commissioners formed a board, called the Board of Education: their sittings were held in the Council Chamber of the Castle of Dublin; and, through the interest of my brother Jonathan, I was appointed their under secretary, with an appointment of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum.

During my short stay in Dublin, previously to this appointment, I endeavoured to gain some knowledge of Ireland, its resources and government, as well as an insight into the manners, customs, and opinions of its inhabitants. I could not but admire that warmth of heart, that liberality of sentiment, and that generous confidence, always maintained by my

countrymen towards each other. All those, whom I had the pleasure of being intimate with, did great honour to their national character. But I was yet very deficient in political science; nor was it till I fulfilled my duty as under secretary to the Board of Education, that I acquired any considerable degree of knowledge in this respect.

It must be allowed that my official career commenced under the happiest auspices. The commissioners of the board, under whom I acted, were the Right Honourable John Heley Hutchinson, the Right Honourable Denis Daly, Isaac Corry, Thomas Burgh, and John Forbes, Esquires, all members of the House of Commons, and men who possessed the highest knowledge and information of any in that august assembly. Mr. Hutchinson, father of the present Lord, rose from the meanest ranks of life, to fame and fortune, high dignity, and exalted station. His elevation was truly pleas-

ing, as the ascent to it had been facilitated by the exertion of conspicuous talents, the labours of genius, and that wisdom which enobles the toils inspired by a laudable ambition.

The Right Honourable Denis Daly united in the same person the rarest combination of birth and fortune, genius and industry, eloquence and sagacity, that were perhaps ever seen blended in any one individual. Such, indeed, were the splendour of his attainments, that he was esteemed a tower of strength to his friends, a bulwark against the rudest assaults of opponents, and a centre of refuge to the people, where they deemed their dearest rights safe from violation. In the hour of security he was an ornament, in the day of danger a protection. If not subservient as the profligate, he was not unsteady as the venal; if not submissive to each mandate of ministers, he could enlighten their ignorance, and guide their inexperience: if not the ready de-

fender of misconduct, he was the invincible advocate of equity and truth.

The Right Honourable Isaac Corry, without the weight of family connexions, or the influence of powerful patronage, was solicited to represent the independent citizens of Newry; and his amiable manners conciliated their affections, while the spirit and integrity of his mind commanded their reverence. Possessing from nature a very pleasing exterior, he lost not that advantage by a slovenly neglect of it; but instantly impressed strangers with a favourable opinion of him, by the gracefulness of his manner, and the unaffected propriety of his deportment. His voice was remarkably good, clear, distinct, and melodious; equally adapted to thunder in the storm of impetuous eloquence, or to insinuate in the soothing accents of captivating persuasion. Ever the friend of constitutional liberty and commercial freedom, he uniformly supported them. In all things, and on all occasions, he

approved himself the worthy representative of a free people.

Mr. Burgh and Mr. Forbes may well be noticed together. They were equally distinguished figures in the House of Commons; and, from their exertions and abilities, had been thought worthy of the highest stations, which were at that time vacant under the Lord Lieutenant. Of the two, Mr. Forbes was the greater man. His language was good, manly, and abundant; more remarkable for great energy than elegance; more invigorated by sentiment than adorned with figures—yet generally correct and pure. Such were the men under whom I had the honour to act; such were the men whom I admired and imitated. I did more: I exerted myself to the utmost to gain their applause. I called forth my latent powers, and roused my torpid energies, not suffering dissipation or play to repress my faculties. I found my reward in the very spirit of the effort; but, to a person of my

turn of mind, one much more flattering, in the increased power which I had thus acquired of redeeming my name, and serving the community.

Application and perseverance achieve miracles. Demosthenes, notwithstanding a natural defect in his speech, became the most animated and sublime orator that tradition has recorded; and, in spite of innumerable moral causes, I obtained the reputation of being a young man who was eminently fitted for official business, and who never could have merited the obloquy which my enemies had attempted to fix on my name.

While in the enjoyment of this distinguished blessing, the government of Ireland was handed over from the Marquis of Buckingham to the Earl of Westmoreland. To the latter nobleman, therefore, it was, that I had to make a report of our committee on the state, value, and condition of the endowed schools, as well as the genius and character of the persons

who held the exclusive enjoyment of their funds.

The report contained four hundred folio pages, all in my own hand-writing, and composed by me from the testimonies of the various persons who were summoned by the Board, and interrogated upon oath as to the value and utility of the schools in question. Nor was it the appearance of this report alone which reflected credit upon me. The language was allowed to be elegant, nervous, glowing, and spirited; abounding in vigour and variety; now copious and splendid; now enlivened with apposite imagery; and again plain, concise, and acute, as the occasion demanded.

Of the persons who honoured this report with their notice and admiration, the Earl of Westmoreland stood the highest. This was the more flattering to me, because his Lordship was endowed by nature with strong natural abilities; while persevering diligence and industry had

added to them all the ornaments of polite and classic literature. Besides, the generality of his conduct reflected the highest honour on his judgment and integrity. Amidst all the schisms and cabals that had distracted Ireland, dividing the different leaders in politics and their followers, his friends in the House of Commons unalterably adhered to him. No defalcation or falling off from them had he ever experienced: in consequence it was expected his power would be long lived, and that those whom he patronised were sure to be pushed up into the highest chambers of the state.

As the report was too voluminous for royal inspection, I received orders from his Excellency to compose an abstract of it for his Majesty. In executing this order, I appeared more anxious to convince than to entertain; and did not produce, from my stores, the glittering tinsel of wordy writers, but the sterling ore of manly sense. My mode of compression

added much grace to my composition; as it was lively without rapidity, and accurate without affectation. This abstract I had the honour of delivering into his Excellency's own hands; on which occasion he thanked me for my diligence and application to business, assuring me that it was his intention to advance me in office as soon as a judicious vacancy should happen to occur.

With a mind so capable and flexible as I possessed, and backed by such powerful patronage, I began to hope that I should one day arrive at the most exalted situation in life. Animated by this presumption, my attention continued to be transferred from pleasure to interest. From the moment I met the sanction of his Excellency, I devoted every hour to the attainment of information, or to the activity of business.

Prudence and foresight exerted their influence. Every motion referred to the wished-for end. The accomplishment

of my ambition appeared in view—the gradations of eminence diminished—wealth and power danced before my eyes. The voice of fame rung in my ears; and, in ambitious anticipations, I heard the plaudits of my friends, and the shouts of the multitude. Nor were such reveries altogether unattended by some shew of realization in the result; for so ignorant were the government and the people of my real vacillating character, that they supported me in my hopes; encouraged me to proceed from vanity to vanity; and, in the place of cautioning a coxcomb that he might be reduced to beggary and disgrace, they erected altars, and offered up incense to a gilded deceiver.

CHAP. XI.

He becomes a Man of Fashion—He meets with a Syren in the Stream of Pleasure.—The Modern Millwood allures him to her Arms from a masked Ball.—Singular Rencounter in her Boudoir.—A Mirror held up to Nature, and Vice shewn its own Image.

NOTHING corrupts and hardens the breast like vanity. Men in that state are unapt to contemplate follies they never felt, as they are generally inexorable against weaknesses from which they themselves consider themselves exempt. Such men abhor advice, and soar aloft insensible to the real merits of humanity.

It was so with me. Vain of the applause which my labours had excited, and, having but little business to claim my attention since the delivery of my official report, a world of new delights was opened to my infatuated view, and

I rushed impetuously into every scene of gaiety and amusement which Dublin, then in the meridian of its splendour and luxury, could afford. The transient shade of sorrow, which had, for a short time, dwelt on my pale countenance, and which was occasioned by the fate of the unfortunate Melanie, soon passed away, and my memory no longer lingered in the contemplation of objects and scenes which were never to return. A rapid career of vice had poisoned the source of the finer feelings of my heart, which were once again nearly utterly destroyed; and I no longer felt the wickedness or danger of my situation.

I was floating on this dangerous stream of pleasure some time, when one evening I attended a public masquerade. Amongst the numerous characters that graced the motley assembly, was one that seemed to attract the general attention of the others. This was a young lady who personated a Persian princess. Wherever she turned

her steps, a number of youths, in various habits, were to be seen in her train, gazing upon the enchanting figure before them in silent rapture; but, notwithstanding they appeared so much struck by her, it was easy to understand, from a few words which some of them dropped, that she was altogether unknown to them.

The fine turnings and exquisite mouldings of her form, that seemed all graceful and bewitchingly elegant, soon caught my eye; who, though long accustomed to gaze upon beauty when adorned by art, was almost involuntarily compelled to mingle with others in her train, and at length became so enamoured of her, that I determined to accost her, in hopes that I should be able to discover who the fair unknown was. As to myself, I possessed a commanding person, and my address had in it much of the insinuation and gallantry of the French school.

With such a superiority in these accomplishments, it became my good fortune

to be noticed by the lovely unknown more than any other of the young gallants that flocked in crowds about her; and I had the happiness to continue with her the whole evening. Without much difficulty I prevailed upon her, towards the close of the amusement, to retire to a recess in the rotunda, where the masquerade was held, in order to obtain some refreshment. When alone, the lady, after some hesitation, and after having observed me with an uncommon degree of attention, consented to remove her mask.

I had been unusually struck by the perfect symmetry of her form, and had scarcely dared to hope that her face would be proportionably beautiful; but when she threw off her mask, I was astonished by the matchless beauty of a countenance in which the loves and the graces seemed to dwell in perpetual dalliance. Never had I beheld so bewitching a countenance, and I became completely fascinated; but, amidst the mad delirium which heated

my ardent desires, I felt there was a certain indescribable expression, that beamed from her soul-piercing eyes, which told me I had once seen a face bearing some resemblance to the one then before me. I trembled at the recollection that I had totally destroyed the happiness of a person equally fair, and who, but for me, might have been a blessing as well as an ornament to the world.

A pang of remorse for a moment tinged my countenance with the pallid hue of melancholy. The lovely stranger, perceiving this, redoubled her efforts to please, and soon dispelled this transient shade of my inconstant sorrow. Wholly enchanted by the charming girl, the hours passed away unnoticed, and my faculties were absorbed by the magic of her conversation, in which her powers were as extraordinary as the beauty of her person. Whatever the subjects we conversed upon, she appeared equally skilled in them; and every one, on which she

touched, appeared to be one that she had made her particular study, evincing a greater expansion of intellect than is usually found in the female sex.

It was a very late hour when a servant announced the lady's carriage, and roused me from my rapturous dream of enchantment to a sense of my real situation. Unwilling to part with my prize as soon as gained, yet not daring to detain her, I attended her to the door, handed her into the carriage, and was turning away with a look of despondency, when she, with an irresistible smile, asked me to take a seat by her side.

Astonished and confused at what I scarcely dared to believe, I for a moment hesitated; until the invitation being repeated, I no longer doubted my happiness, eagerly sprung into the carriage, and seated myself by her in a state of ecstasy.

If it be more grateful to an ingenuous mind to celebrate the praises of humanity,

it is no less necessary to expose the vices that deform it. In enumerating the excellencies of men, we present a model to imitate; in detecting their depravity, we hold out an example to deter.

"To hold the mirror up to nature, and to shew vice its own image," is the design of these memoirs. It will be styled a severe one; but there are cases where severity is justice, and I freely acknowledge my own case to be such. I must be severe on myself. If the public, however, gain benefit or instruction thereby, my original wish will be most effectually accomplished.

Having acknowledged my merit where it was due, I must now turn from the happy side of my character, and view myself where it appears very much in the shade. As I have stated, I entered the carriage with the fair unknown; and, after many turnings through a variety of streets, we arrived at the door of an immense mansion, situated in Merion Square,

the most fashionable quarter of the city. It was opened by servants arrayed in the most splendid liveries, and bearing wax lights; who conducted me into a saloon, decorated with all that was most valuable and costly in art.

In this apartment a sumptuous collation was prepared, consisting of every delicacy which the luxurious season afforded. I had not waited long, when this magnificent scene became more interesting, by the entrance of the fairy-like form with which I was so much fascinated. She was now attired in a loose muslin robe, through whose white transparency the fairest limbs, that ever gambolled in love's wanton mazes, shewed their soft outline; and, being but half concealed, excited the convulsive throb of desire, while they dazzled the sight of the enraptured beholder.

She approached me, and, while her warm touch coursed through all my veins, led me to the banquet; where, during

the melody of music, I continued to gaze uninterruptedly upon the heavenly form before my view. Amidst the unrivalled charms of this lady, I frequently imagined I beheld a more beautiful likeness of the unhappy girl I had seduced; and perhaps this idea served to increase the violence of my emotions, when I regarded her with such impassioned looks.

The supper at length concluded, and we retired to a more private apartment, where some time was spent amidst that delicious pleasure which a beautiful woman has it in her power to bestow upon a favoured youth. But dreadful, indeed, is the reflection, that those charms, which were given by the Almighty in order to increase the happiness of man, should be prostituted to the worst of all purposes, and frequently be rendered the cause of the destruction of those very beings, whose happiness they should have constituted throughout the whole of their days.

A loud knocking was heard at the door. Suddenly, amidst all our pleasure, the lady became thoughtful, and appeared agitated by some important matter; nor had she time to recover her usual serenity, before a gentleman introduced himself, and demanded of her, in a tone of authority, why she admitted a stranger, at a time that she might have expected his company. "Sir," said he, next turning abruptly towards me, "I desire you will depart, and be no longer here an intruder." I gave him a glance of contempt, and told him that nothing but my respect for that lady restrained me from throwing him out of the window. These few words awakened all the emotions of passion in his bosom. He made an effort to force me from the apartment; and, as I resisted with a violence which removed his mask, I soon discovered my opponent to be the Lord Lieutenant!—my late eulogist,—my promised patron—the sheet-anchor of my existing vanity and future pride!

From the instant I recognized his Lordship, I gazed upon him, with folded arms, and incapable of uttering a single ejaculation. As for the lady, a cold perspiration distilled from her brow, and her whole frame was convulsed with terror. She continued in an immoveable attitude of affright, and implored me, with uplifted hands, to leave the house at the instant. I foolishly imagined my honour concerned, and hesitated to comply; on which the Noble Earl hastily left the apartment, first bidding the lady an eternal farewell.

In a moment all the loveliness of her countenance fled, giving place to the fiend-like contortions of phrenzy; and, as the pallid hue of violent anger spread over her altered features, an indignant smile of irony dwelt upon her lips. My whole attention was arrested by her manner. My eyes, as if by a magic power, were rivetted upon her's, in a steady immoveable stare; and, like the dangerous fascination of the rattle-snake, the more I

endeavoured to remove the charm, the more powerful it became.

In this state we remained during a long and dreary pause of death-like silence, which was at length interrupted by a dreadful fit of hysteric laughter, that appalled my very soul. Scarcely knowing what I did, I called for help. The usual restoratives were applied with the greatest assiduity. On her recovery, I learned from her that she was the celebrated Nora Stratford, the avowed mistress of the Noble Earl; and that, through my obstinacy and misconduct, there remained no doubt but that he would withdraw his protection, and cast her, friendless and abandoned, upon the town.

My head was then racking with pain, to such a degree, that I could enter into no discussion; but begging her to be more composed, hastily retired—flew to my own chambers, and was soon buried in profound slumber.

CHAP. XII.

The Writer leads a Life of gilded Luxury.—He has no fixed Principles of Morality, and no Sense of Duty.—His Brother endeavours to snatch him from impending Ruin.—His Prospects are shrouded in an impervious Gloom.—Covered with Debts, he abandons his Office, and flies to Switzerland.

A MAN, in the hey-day of his existence, endowed with vanity or talents, and engaged in the routine of dissipation, never considers the more remote consequences of his actions, but commits what he thinks a trifling fault, without having the least idea of the quantity of evil it may produce; or, if he does consider it, he imagines that it does not concern himself, and consequently wholly disregards it.

But men ought never to forget that the smallest dereliction from virtue is a ma-

terial evil, even if not followed by a greater, which is too commonly the case. When once that safeguard is impaired, ruin and devastation are the certain consequence. Reader, witness my own life. Notwithstanding the fatigue, confusion, and anxiety I had undergone during the preceding night, I awoke at an early hour, and all my gloomy apprehensions gave place to more pleasing reflections. The soft blushes of Aurora had tinged the fair face of incense-breathing morn, and I felt alive to all her glowing beauties: the murky gloom of darkness had fled, with all her host of imaginary dangers; and the bright God of day once more benignantly smiled upon the earth.

I arose, and passed that day, and days and weeks, in a total disregard to official duties, but in a strict observance of every place of public amusement, as well as the manners and habits of fashionable life. These occupations naturally brought me into the circle and

friendship of the most celebrated characters of the times. At the board of green cloth I dined with Colonels Lenox, St. Ledger, and Freemantle. To the barracks I was often invited by the present General Hope, then an ensign in Pomeroy's Sixty-Fourth Foot. At the billiard table I played with Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Denis Bowes Daly, Vandeleur, and Sturt. In the ball-room I danced with the Allboroughs, Montgomeries, and Llewellins; and on the Circular Road, I drove Nora Stratford, and sometimes the equally fair Emily Rose.

But this was a state of luxury, which required the gold of Mexico for its support. I had not that possession; I, therefore, became an utter stranger to any fixed principle of morality. No sense of duty or attachment to obligation ever served as a restraint on my conduct, from the moment I moved in a circle above my means. Punctuality, or adherence to engagement, seemed beneath my no-

tice; and hence, my credit became unusually bad; equally in disrepute with Jews and Gentiles; with the tradesmen in Dublin, and the black-legs on the Curragh of Kildare. A libertine in all my principles, I was more sensual in my pleasures than delicacy will permit me to mention: and over this part of my life I cast a veil.

With a mind so capable and flexible as mine, as I before had to observe, I might have arrived at the most exalted situation in life; but I unfortunately engaged originally in a profession, at an age when my reason was not sufficiently matured to form a proper estimate of human principles and their actions. Thus, at the period of my career in office, I united with a set of profligate wretches, who possessed not even the shadow of any one good principle; who laughed at religion; who daily insulted virtue by their actions, and who nightly revelled in scenes of drunkenness, debauchery, and vice.

These beings, calling themselves men, by degrees allured me into their snares. I was hurried away, by the illusive phantom of pleasure, to the precipice, on the brink of which I stood awhile, looking in vain for any one who could give me good advice; and my innocence was soon overwhelmed in the wide vortex of dissipation, into which I had been hurled. A long course of licentiousness had reduced me to the fallen appearance which I bore, when I arrived at my father's house, after my imprisonment for my imputed murder of the brother of the once lovely and lost Melanie. I have been thus particular in describing my situation, because it forms the principal feature in the remaining part of my narrative.

Notwithstanding I had deeply neglected my brother Jonathan, and appeared to despise both his habits of life and social connexions, he no sooner discovered me to be on the brink of ruin, than he flew to my assistance; and after aiding me

with means to the extent of his capacity, addressed me in the following most tender and affectionate terms:

"In you, my dear Tom, are fully exemplified the terrible effects of a dissipated life. The keen flashes of your once ardent imagination no longer shoot from your eye; they are for ever fled, and are supplied by that sickly languor which betrays a decayed constitution. An invariable paleness covers your altered features, which are seldom disturbed except by an affected smile; but I most regret the destruction of your sensibility. You once possessed feelings that were all alive to the sufferings of mankind, and you were ever attentive to the plaintive voice of private woe. There was a time when your honour and integrity commanded the admiration of all who knew you. Universal homage was paid to your numerous and rare talents, by those high above you, and by those who ranked within the immediate circle of your

acquaintance; but, as is always the case in great minds, your passions are ardent and powerful in the extreme, and require the firm and temperate hand of virtue to direct them with proper effect to the objects of your present pursuit. Like all others, who possess passions unusually strong, you have much to guard against; for such persons are capable of the greatest advancement in virtue and knowledge, or the greatest excess in vice, according to the stimulus applied.

"It is much to be feared, dear Tom," continued this amiable brother, "that you are now little in the habit of serious reflection; yet I am fain to hope that sensibility is not utterly extinct; and that time will open your mind to a sense of its important and relative duties: nor will it be any derogation from your circumstances, if you attend to the few suggestions which I throw out to you. Arrived at the full vigour and maturity of manhood, the criminal ebullitions of

youth are no longer pardonable in one, whose bad example must necessarily have such wide and deleterious influence. It is time that you should for ever abandon your disgraceful follies, and early companions, associating only with those who would point out to you the paths of genuine greatness, and inculcate the duty of morals, religion, and patriotism."

With that nervous eloquence which characterises my brother's language, he continued till I sunk under his entire dominion, and promised, as there was faith in man, to be guided in future by the observations of his great and enlightened mind, instead of the vagaries and wanderings of my own perverted heart, and extravagant empassioned soul.

Some men are gained by lenity and indulgence, others require the rod of severity. Insensible to kindness, they are to be corrected only by rigid discipline. I had long afforded a singular

example of depravity. Let me now, before I proceed in my sad eventful history, be awakened to the duties of humanity.

No sooner had my brother finished his pathetic remonstrance, than I sank into a state of sensibility, which continued for more than three or four days. After that period, my faculties received a sudden energy, and I came to the fixed and unalterable resolution of throwing up my office, abandoning Dublin for ever, and proceeding to Switzerland, there to live on my ensign's half-pay, cultivate the finer feelings of the heart, and range through the bright regions of intellectuality, to a final scene of perpetual and heavenly joy.

With eyes ready to overflow, and a mind refusing every solace, save that of expatriation, I exclaimed:—"Why did I ever listen to the soothing dictates of pleasure, which bound me to a vicious

world? But I did listen, and my heart, unable to resist the fascination, first yielded itself a silent, mournful, and secret victim to the all-subduing power; then awoke to that cursed reality which my brother has so beautifully pictured, and which has left me amidst the surrounding shades of despondency and distress.

"Yes! I will retire to Switzerland," continued I, "and the storms of mankind shall rave over my humble cot unnoticed by me. The cruel vices of men cannot reach my innocent abode, or agitate the passions of my tranquil breast. My soul, wounded and sick unto death, only requires the calm of solitude to wean it effectually from the fading pleasures of this world."

Thus did I come to the resolution of exiling myself, and felt delighted at the thought; for what ray of hope, however feeble, what gleam of honour was there remaining, to cheer me on my way through

the weary pilgrimage of public life? Had I not incurred the displeasure of the viceroy, forfeited the opinion of the community, lost the esteem of my friends, sullied my fame, blotted my intellects, and contracted debts which I had not the capacity to discharge?

Were not, then, all my prospects, which were once so bright, shrouded in an impervious gloom? Was not my youthful bud, which might have opened into a fair flower, and adorned the weedy garden of the state, nipt in its earliest blossoms, by the chilling blasts of licentiousness and vice? My honour had no foundation, on which to rest in my native country. But some feeble glimmerings of happier days lighted up my desponding mind, as I looked towards Switzerland, and like the rays of the morning sun they appeared, dispelling the gloom of a stormy night. My mind now became calm and resigned. I made my peace

with my God. I mingled with fervid thankfulness the most grateful sensations of sympathy, and hastened towards my chosen retreat, there to find a balm for the wounds of my heart, and pursue a virtuous course of life, which would sweeten the most painful moments of retrospection.

CHAP. XIII.

The Feelings of the Reader are shocked.—The Author confesses to the Robbery of his Father.—He pursues his Route to Switzerland.—Acts like a Fool, and moralizes like a Saint.—Paints the principal Features and Occurrences of his Journey.—Arrives at Zurich.—Visits Lavater.—Courts and betrays him.

THERE is a manliness of character in a public writer, which operates on the mind, much in the same manner that courage in the individual affects us. When not engaged in the support of avowed villainy it commands respect and regard, and shades many imperfections, that, without its aid, would prove too sufficiently glaring.

Bravery bestows more than a temporary lustre on the deeds which it dignifies: it sheds a general radiance over the whole series of actions, and gives to each of them

a strength of impression captivating to the passions, and imposing to the understanding. Though its possessor may not be peculiarly devoted to the service of the community, but often seeks by his labours the acquisition of private emolument, and the completion of private schemes, he seeks them by open and direct roads; neither working his way through the windings of craft, nor advancing his progress by overleaping the obstacles of honour and the dictates of truth.

I hope I have given some evidence of this manliness of literary character in the preceding pages. To evince my further claim to it, I have the mortification to confess that I have not yet recited one of the greatest outrages I committed, previously to my departure from Ireland. I have to shock the reader's feelings by another instance of the dreadful effects of extravagance and libertinism. Finding myself deeply involved in debt, at Dublin, and having long experienced the futility

of appealing to relatives and friends, I framed a plan for drawing the sum of three hundred pounds out of the hands of an agent or attorney of my father, and succeeded to the full extent of my attempt.

Like the faint cry of the affrighted seamew, whose feeble notes of distress endeavour in vain to appease the storms that agitate the mighty waters of the great deep, so did the plaintive voice of insulted virtue fruitlessly strive to arouse my attention to the iniquity of this act. Clouds of mental darkness yet obscured the sun of knowledge, and vice had again in this instance to destroy virtue, by sweeping with the maddening course of a whirlwind over my whole soul.

After this deed of impiety, I was no longer able to remain in Ireland, and prepared to depart for the continent with all that caution and precipitancy which characterize the conduct of corruption and guilt. The morning, which

dawned upon my departure, at length arrived. The sails were unfurled; the lofty streamers floated on the breeze that swelled their widely-expanded bosoms, and the crowded deck was all in motion. The ship was under sail, and the shores of Ireland had retired into distance, and had sunk below the horizon; yet was I gazing on the vacancy. Many minutes elapsed before I started from my reverie, and cast a glance through the whole prospect, searching in vain for some object, however rude, to break the general sameness; but when not even the haggard front of a rock presented itself, nor yet the wheeling flight of the sea-mew, to attract the attention, I flew to the imagination for aid, and poured out my sorrows in wild lamentation:—

"Farewell, ye gay scenes of former delight," said I; "ye mountains, whose dangerous steeps I so often have climbed, ye waving woods, in whose dark recesses I so oft have listened to the gentle sighs

of the wind, and ye silver streams, to whose murmurs I so oft have lent my attentive ear with delight—farewell! Oh, may I again tread your sweet retirements, may I again rove in these flowery meads, and pluck the inviting hawthorn from your shrubs! But no. My light and cheerful steps will never again ramble amid your beauties; never more shall I steal your choicest flowers to deck the bosom of the fair nymphs who often rambled with me, and whose hearts glowed with silent rapture as they viewed with me these scenes of my youthful pleasure. The hidden warbler of the grove shall tune his heaven-taught melody unheard by me. The refreshed blade shall retain its dew-drop undisturbed. The flowers of my native valley shall spring up, bloom and wither, unnoticed by me; for alas! I shall be far away from all that has hitherto yielded me pleasure. Yes, I must tear myself from my friends, from my home, and every thing that till now

had been rendered dear to me. But the errors of my life command it, and I obey."

At length the ship reached England. I proceeded on to London; settled the mode of receiving my half-pay with Messieurs Meyricks, the army agents; received a letter of credit on Lausanne for my three hundred pounds, and, without loss of time, set off for Switzerland by the way of France and Stralsburg. This journey abounded in objects proper for intellectual pursuits, and pleasurable occupations; but in the midst of them, my memory would fondly recur to the scenes I had left behind me; and when I considered that I had left my aged parents, my brothers and sisters, without imparting to them my intention, without soliciting their forgiveness, or even without bidding them a last adieu, a heavy sigh would escape my bosom,—yet the same exalted motive, which at first induced me to quit my native land, still actuated me, and with additional ardour.

I had already experienced a kind of foretaste of the sweet and placid joys, which reward the labours of those who bend the whole force of their minds towards some one simple and honest point, and who come to the conviction that rural life is the source of all worldly good, and virtue and piety the fountain of eternal happiness.

When discovering little to praise or admire, it affords a kind of negative satisfaction if there does not appear much to censure or condemn. When a person possesses no very great resources from nature or fortune, it were unjust to expect any very liberal accomplishments. The character of a traveller is almost worn out; and every attempt to keep or revive one, so useful and meritorious, is entitled to our warmest approbation.

But I am a biographer, not a tourist; therefore it only remains for me to give an account of myself, not of my travels. In doing this, however, like the aged Nestor, I shall strive to give the reste-

spect of my early days a glow and ardour of colouring that may make it interesting; or, like the wise Ulysses, convey my adventures in such a manner as will yield the greatest degree of utility and satisfaction to the reader.

It is already known to him that I resolved on proceeding to Switzerland through Paris and the Upper Rhine. The principal features and occurrences of that journey I now present. No country in the world is more luxuriant, or can boast of more riches, than the one which lies on the route I had chosen to take. On my arrival in France, I beheld the happy soil, every where teeming with the most luxurious fruits, and covered with the most enchanting verdure. No desolated wilderness, no barren spot, arrested the delighted eye; but cultivation was every where displayed, arrayed in her choicest robes. Aromatic herbs of various hues bespangled the eternal verdure of the plains, and scented all the

soft winds that wantoned through the silent groves with balmy fragrance.

Large and numerous cities, and populous villages, were seated in delightful situations throughout this charming country, and severally afforded delight to my ardent mind, which investigated every object both in art and nature that came under its notice. At length the walls of Zurich appeared in the blue distance, and awakened fresh emotions of pleasure in my breast. Hope at once unveiled a golden prospect to my view; and, as the enchanted goddess smiled upon the scenes before me, beckoned me on to delights yet unknown.

Zurich exhibited a scene to me entirely new; being filled with strangers from all parts of the world, who were busily engaged in observing the preparations made in France, for the exhibition of the most extraordinary tragedy that was ever performed upon any great public stage. At Zurich I was introduced to all the men

of distinction in the place; nor had I tarried there long before I became conversant with the habits and manners of the place. Nay, more: I was fast accumulating a store of general knowledge and local information as to every canton or state.

In the course of these engagements I had several times the good fortune to meet with the celebrated Lavater. I at first approached him as a respectful admirer, but was soon admitted into his confidence and esteem. Yet there was something mysterious, sublime, and terrible in the idea of a man, who, by looking in my face, could read the inmost habitual sentiments of my heart. A person, claiming this power, and confirming his claim by some striking instances of the exercise of it, becomes an object of admiration and awful curiosity to those before whom his claims are thus preferred. Enthusiasm exalting in him, with whom it begins, the native fervour of true

genius, rarely fails to propagate itself with the power and rapidity of a conflagration, spreading itself over a town built of dry wood.

We are all by nature, to a certain degree, dabblers in physiognomy; liking or disliking strangers, at first sight, according to their looks; attaching in opinion certain intellectual and moral qualities, to certain diversities of form, and often conceiving prejudices on these heads, which we can never afterwards suffer reason to efface. Besides these sentiments, which favour, in the heart of almost every person, Lavater's pretensions to a physiognomist, there is another and still more powerful auxiliary in that anxious curiosity, which racks every man's and woman's bosom, to know the secrets of their neighbours' hearts.

Hence I found the science of Lavater, during my stay at Zurich, to confer some part of the advantages of the ring of Gyges. To the adepts in it, a window

was, in some sort, opened (if it were not false science), in every other person's breast. The passion for the study became almost universal. His book lay on every table. The sublimity, the sensibility, the reason which it was supposed to exhibit, were most ardently approved. Not a servant could be hired, in many families, without a comparison of his looks with those features, which were said to indicate virtue and wisdom, or crime and sensuality.

The celebrity of his name attracted all my attention; and, as I have observed, I visited him frequently, and observed him much. His life was innocent, his manners were gentle, his conversation had the insinuations of obliging politeness, and the enchantments of sensibility and fancy. They, who came in idle curiosity, seldom went away from him otherwise than as fond and implicit disciples. But this was not the exact case with me. I admired the man, but I was not the dupe of the

mysterious, overweening pretensions of the physiognomist. In truth, I considered the whole to proceed from the head of an ingenious impostor, or from the folly of a silly dreamer.

Availing myself of this opinion, I composed, with shrewdly satirical intent, a little work, called *The Physiognomical Quixote*, in which all the follies and artifice of Lavater were exposed to derision, with acknowledged pleasantry and unaffected humour. I sold this for sixty crowns to a German, and he brought out the satirical fiction at a seasonable moment, when physiognomy was so much in vogue as to draw popular notice on whatever might be written with tolerable ability, either for or against it. Its circulation was very great. It was universally read; and to this early success in a foreign land, is to be attributed my having, some time after, formed the resolution of one day becoming a public writer. On coming to this determination, I resolved to leave

Zurich, and seek for such a solitude as would be favourable to the perusal of the French, German, and Italian authors; and as might prove essentially useful, by enabling me to purify my heart and affections, and to improve the whole tenor of my conduct.

CHAP. XIV.

Reaches Lausanne.—Becomes intimate with Mr. Gibbon.—Sketches his Character.—Mention of the Duke of Richmond, and Paymaster Steele.—Mr. Gibbon inspires the Traveller with a new train of moral Reasoning.—He resolves to live in the Vicinity of Vevay.—The Rock of Saint Preux.—Experiences the Pleasures of a contemplative Mind.

DESERTERS from the standard of dissipation, when duly enrolled under the banners of virtue, are remarked to possess a promptitude of zeal, and an ardour of exertion, superior to those who have constantly fought in its cause.

Hence speculative theorists deduce a reason why all churchmen are so anxious to procure the aid of those atheists who have risen to eminence by combating against them; attaching them to their creed at an expense greater than they are usually wont to lavish on those who have

borne, in their service, the whole burden and heat of the cross.

On my departure from Zurich in search of a retreat favourable to literature and worth, I laboured with all the vehemence of the latest proselyte, and all the eagerness of the newest convert. I reached Lausanne, with an unfaded sensibility to the attractions of a useful and rural life, and had scarcely delivered my letters of credit and introduction, before I began to look around me for a situation commensurate with my means, or favourable to my views. To the town of Lausanne I took an invincible dislike. It appeared to me to generate nothing but sloth and indolence; and was at the time infested by that order of Englishmen, who, having no resources within themselves, first get dissatisfied with their own home, and next go about complaining of *ennui* in the streets of foreign cities.

This sarcasm is subject to one great exception; to a wonderful one—that a

man like Gibbon, whose writings have exalted the glory of his country, and whose great literary fame has reached the utmost extremities of the civilised world, was necessitated to live, an exile, as it were, at Lausanne, in obscurity and distress, while such a number of locusts were preying on its vitals, and supported by a profligate dependance.

It was impossible to behold Mr. Gibbon without being occupied by this political idea. Surely such perversion of national property proves the insensibility and degeneracy of the government that encourages it. Mr. Steele, the son of the Duke of Rutland's butler, was a privy-counsellor, and joint paymaster of the forces, while Mr. Gibbon was left to cultivate philosophy and science at Lausanne, without a protector or friend! Nay, more: when the Duke of Manchester went ambassador to Paris, Mr. Gibbon was desirous to attend him as secretary; but at that time, likewise, his merits were super-

seded by the superior claim and pretensions of a mere novice in diplomacy, Mr. Scriven, to whom the appointment was granted. Mr. Scriven had the sanction of Lord Carlisle's recommendation; Mr. Gibbon had only his own merit to recommend him. The philosopher, however, has this advantage in all countries—his vast comprehensive mind creates a field of resources any and every where.

Mr. Gibbon exceeded all men I had ever before met for great practical learning and sound extensive philosophy. What a contemptible being did I consider myself when contrasted with so distinguished a character! How prostrate and low did I fall before his overwhelming and envied ascendency! I had the good fortune to meet him several times, and to have considerable opportunities of observing his powers and character.

His conversation accorded much with his writings. His voice was strong, articulate, and loud; abounding with great

variety of tones, and filled with every note of melody; it overpowered by its force, and captivated with its sweetness: and his delivery, neither slow nor precipitate, seemed to have been well studied, and was judiciously managed. His language was good, clear, masculine, and nervous; not deficient in purity or correctness, and often illumined by brilliant terms and illustrative metaphors. In argument he was acute, artful, and insidious; wielding at pleasure, and managing with skill all the weapons of debate, from the diffuse laxity of rambling observation, to the accuracy and closeness of just reasoning. He sometimes also enlivened his argument with sallies of wit and flashes of fancy; not, perhaps, of that kind adapted to abide the judgment of the severe critic, but of that broad and popular species, which Cicero recommends to the adoption of the forensic speaker.

To Mr. Gibbon was I indebted for all the pleasure and information I had expe-

rienced during my short stay in Lausanne; and though his memory may be disregarded by hardened dulness, (for on some heads the impassive lightnings play,) and though his principles may be despised by obstinate prejudice, (for on them all evidence is lost,) yet am I resolved ever to consider him with respect, and to acknowledge his attentions to me with gratitude.

There are certain elementary parts of our knowledge, which nothing can communicate but the actual contemplation of the face of nature; but to me the country had still more commanding advantages. I was only in the novitiate of virtue, and required to be placed beyond the limits of temptation and the prevalence of example. Now the country is ever comparatively barren of all the gratifications and excitements to vicious desire. Its pleasures are addressed to those simple appetites which nature has given us to be our purveyors of the first

necessaries of life, to be the guardians of our very existence. It presents few of those things which pall to satiety and loathing, and therefore leave the sense and fancy in a state requiring artificial stimuli to rouse them again into salutary activity. It presents not society in those modes and forms which render its intercourse irritating and seductive. It leads not to those meditations, in the depth of which the heart and the understanding are the most liable to estrange themselves from nature and from God.

Happily for me, I was under the direction of this new train of moral reasoning, and left Lausanne to reside at an old chateau in the vicinity of Vevay, to the owner of which I was introduced through the means of Mr. Gibbon, who was very partial to his society. It was towards the close of the finest summer's day I ever beheld, when I arrived at this long wished for retreat. My eye eagerly wandered over the scene before me, which ap-

peared to combine all the grand and most beautiful objects of nature in one spot. There, indeed, the descriptive powers of a Ratcliffe, or the magic pencil of a Claude, would be found insufficient to convey an adequate idea of the lovely prospect.

Just beneath my feet an extensive and most sublime lake expanded its undulating surface, until it reached the cities of Lausanne and Geneva, and mountains rearing their bold heads over the white and silvery clouds that gently floated on the breeze. At the opposite side, opened rather to the left, a superb view of Mount Jura, with its various projections, recesses, and gradations of ascent, here clothed with the richest vines, there exhibiting nest-like cottages, the ruins of ancient castles, or solitary towers. Towards Lausanne, on the right, appeared beautiful meadows skirted with wood, the smooth expanse of the lake of Geneva, and beyond these, the gloomy terrific rocks of the Savoy shore.

Before I entered the house, I sat down on an eminence under the shade of a chesnut tree, and thence raised my eyes to the steep heights of Mellieraie, from which the disconsolate Saint Prieux once thought of throwing himself head-long, and from which also he wrote a letter to his Julia. In my earliest youth I read this letter with the wildest enthusiasm. Reader, judge, then, what were my feelings at the sight of such a scene.

The education of the heart is the work of rural life, and where this preliminary is neglected, all the pursuits of the individual after human happiness will be fruitless; for happiness, as far as it is attainable by mortals, consists in the perfect harmony of the soul. All the turbulent and dissocial passions, as disturbers of this harmony, are inimical to happiness.

But example is more beneficial than theory; and I shall proceed to shew the fountain whence these aphorisms originate. Situated as I was, at the moment just described, the picturesque view was

bounded on every side by the finest barriers of nature, but confined on the land side to a few miles in extent; yet this was most beautifully diversified with woods, meadows, vineyards, and corn fields, which were so admirably intermingled, as to produce the most enchanting effect, and more than enable it to vie with the rural vales of Arno and Andalusia.

At a small distance, under my feet, a roaring cataract gushed from the side of the mountain, and tumbled its foaming flood precipitately into the lake below, where its waters were lost in the misty distance, and its reiterated dashings from rock to rock could be heard no more. On its ridge was a small hamlet, and a chapel reared its humble, but beautiful spire, over the tops of some fine old walnut trees, that appeared coeval with the building they surrounded; whilst the more lowly dwellings of the rustics were scarcely distinguishable amidst the varied

foliage of the intermingled trees. The whole had a wild and most romantic effect. The mansion chosen for my residence was about two hundred yards from the church. It appeared to be an antique building, and the only good house in the picturesque view.

As I stood gazing upon this pleasing prospect, the sun suddenly emerged from a cloud, and darted his feeble rays across the lake, throwing one half under the lengthened shadow of Mount Jura, that obstructed his departing beams, whilst the other part glowed in all the warmth of the richest tints imaginable: but the shade almost imperceptibly increased as the great luminary of day pursued his glorious descent in the western heavens, and the shaggy summits of the mountains only remained gilded with his golden rays.

A numerous herd of goats scampering by me roused my attention, and I perceived them gambolling among the

crags and bushes that surrounded me, skipping from point to point with amazing agility and ease, which added a pleasing variety to the scene. I stood for some minutes admiring their wonderful evolutions, when the deep sullen toll of a bell struck my ear. It was slowly repeated at distant intervals, and sounded like the solemn dirge of death, evidently proceeding from the hamlet. Some one must be dead, thought I; and, in a moment, a thousand melancholy ideas rushed into my mind, which, in some degree harmonised with the still calmness of the scene.

All was serene, and none but pleasing sounds broke the general silence. Nought was heard, save the hollow lowing of the cattle, the plaintive bleating of the sheep moving towards the fold, the drowsy hum of the beetle, or the occasional merry note of the peasant, as he plodded his weary way towards his cheerful cottage, there to forget in his humbleness the toils of the day and the wants of the morrow.

I felt that such moments as I then enjoyed, were the dearest pleasures of a contemplative mind. It is in solitude, surrounded by the dearest objects in nature, where all her beauties smile upon us, and when her grandeur calls forth our admiration, that the finest ideas of the human mind are created: it is then that our thoughts are borne upon the lofty wings of imagination to the confines of perfect felicity. Thus it was with a bard, whose fame was immortal. His great pleasure was to walk on the sheltered side of a wood in a cloudy winter day, and to hear the storm rave amongst the trees; but greater still was his delight to ascend some eminence during the agitations of nature; to stride along its summit, while the lightning flashed around him; and amidst the howlings of the tempest, to apostrophize the spirit of the storm.

Did not the mountains, the woods, and the streams of Morven, light up the sublime imagery and conceptions of Ossian's

favoured bards, every sentence of whose effusions presents an identical image, and that in the most sublime form? But it is to the warm and ardent imagination only that nature unfolds her chiefest beauties with their proper effect; and those, who are endowed with this greatest of all blessings, know how to value the sensations which scenes like these inspire.

Under the dark shade of trees amid the rocks, I marked the mellow light of the setting sun. I observed what romantic and picturesque forms the features of this scenery successively assume, as they are by degrees totally lost under the shades of night; and I continued there in a musing delightful enthusiasm of taste and sentiment, till heaven and earth were uniformly veiled in the darkness of majestic night.

CHAP. XV.

Becomes the Inmate of Mr. La Tour.—Considers Common Sense the best Guide through Civil Life.—The Workings of his Mind are strong.—He pauses in a Church-Yard.—He reveres the Haunts of Innocence and Peace.

GENIUS, virtue, piety, the kindest of dispositions, and the happiest elasticity of fancy, must be quickly lost to every useful purpose, if the delusions of one passion, however amiable, be suffered to acquire habitually an unbounded power over the mind; if a sensibility, naturally irritable, shall be cherished till it become a feverish disease; if the dreams of the imagination shall be continually indulged to the exclusion of all the common sense of sober ordinary life.

These reflections rushed upon my mind, on finding the evening far advanced, and no useful object by any means accom-

plished. I should have presented myself at my new habitation in time to have observed something of the family, to have had my apartment arranged, and to have seen myself in other respects made comfortable; whereas by yielding to an enthusiastic sensibility, the day was consumed without having achieved any thing for the promotion of my accommodation and prosperity.

The moon had reached an elevated situation, and hung like a beautiful lamp suspended in the blue expanse of heaven, immediately above a gothic archway formed by the broad extending arms of the trees, entwining their branches over my head, through which she darted her pale beams, and threw their varied shadows on the walk before me, as I passed to the house of my destined repose; whilst the quiet solitude of the place was disturbed only by the murmuring noise of the adjacent lake, and the hollow hootings of an owl, that wheeled around the neighbouring

steeple, as the clock was telling the tenth hour.

I at length reached a long flight of steps leading to the hall-door, and knocked for admittance, but no one came: I repeated it again and again with additional vehemence, but still without the desired effect. At length, as I was raising the knocker for the fourth time, the old gentleman, with whom the agreement had been made for me, came to the door, and admitted me, with an address that manifested much gravity and goodness of heart. We now entered a spacious hall, hung round with the family portraits of persons, whose names, partaking with the nature of their bodies, had long ago perished in oblivion. Mr. La Tour, for so he was called, conducted me into an oak wainscotted parlour, on the right of this ghostly looking hall, in which was a most comfortable fire. The cheerful blaze contributed not a little to raise my spirits; and here a cloth was spread for supper.

The figure and countenance of my kind host was very impressive, at once conveying to my mind the most favourable opinion of him. He appeared to be above fifty years of age; his person was tall, well-proportioned, graceful, and extremely commanding: but the dignity of his countenance even exceeded that of his person. The radiance of intellectual glory beamed there in full splendour, receiving additional lustre from the general air of benevolence that harmonized all his features; yet there was a depression visible upon his brow, and a certain softness of expression dwelt in his fine dark eyes, which indicated the abode of sorrow, or at least hinted that melancholy had recently held her gloomy empire over his mind. His was one of those few faces that denoted the greatest powers of understanding, joined to all the most amiable qualities of the heart; rendering him incapable of injuring even the least worthy of his fellow creatures.

At supper the conversation turned upon various subjects; among which the antiquity of the house was canvassed, and the character of the personages represented by the portraits on the walls. With many more subjects of a like nature we amused the time until the hour of withdrawing to rest arrived. He then conducted me to a room at the further extremity of the house, so large, that the glare of a single candle was not sufficient to illumine all the walls at the same moment; but one end remained in gloom. The bed and the rest of the furniture were all covered with green damask, somewhat torn; the walls exhibited the remains of some once valuable tapestry, which now hung down in ragged festoons, with here and there an old oil picture, so effaced that even the subject was not distinguishable. Fatigued to death, I ceased to criticise, and was soon buried in a profound slumber.

When a train of thought, romantic and

unprofitable, occupies the imagination, it frequently acquires such power over the attention, as to render its exertion upon present objects quite impossible. The imagination alone is exercised, and the mind acquires a habit of indulging in visionary reveries, till it neither sees, hears, understands, marks, nor inwardly digests what passes around it.

Of this absence of mind I myself was an example, immediately on my arrival at the house of the amiable Monsieur La Tour. The workings of my mind were so strong, that I arose before the night had expired, and moved the shutters from the windows, drew a chair, and sat contemplating the still serenity of the scene. I never beheld so clear, so beautiful a night: no part of the vast expanse of heaven was obscured by a single cloud, but the same deep azure every where prevailed, over which the bright twinkling stars were bespangled in countless multitude; and ever and anon the swiftly

winged meteor would sweep its rapid course through the bright regions of air; and sometimes down shot a starry light to the earth, where, all extinguished, it left not a wreck behind; while the pale-faced moon rode on the steady wing of time, in slow but solemn majesty through her nocturnal course, yielding her silver light to enliven the gloom that hung around the globe.

The fine antique tower of the church formed the principal object in the view. It stood exactly opposite to my window, and was seen through an opening in the old walnut-trees that nearly surrounded it, among whose branches the gently whispering breeze played her wild notes, whilst the white tombstones reared their lowly heads among the long grass that bent mournfully over them, and quivered in the wind. The awful stillness of the scene, together with the solemnity of the objects which composed it, conspired to bring on one of my enthusiastic rhapsodies.

"And are these the mansions of the dead?" said I, as I regarded one stone that stood a little higher than the rest.—"Yes; one small mound of earth is all thy proud ensign, thou poor mortal! All thy honours are comprised in one small stone, on which, mayhap, is graved thy name, no where else recorded; or that thou hast fulfilled the several duties of father, son, husband, or brother, with pious care. Thou didst rejoice in thy existence; thou didst feel the possession of superior faculties; thou didst boast thy strength, and imagine thyself immortal: but, where art thou now? Is all laid with thee in the narrow house? Not even a name left behind! Nothing but a poor perishable monument of earth, raised as a warning to the sexton not to dig there! —Oh, short-lived, vain, presumptuous man! thou flutterest like the butterfly, or the insect of the day, from flower to flower. Thou feedest on trifles light as air, exulting in the name and condition

of man, as superior to that of other created beings, without performing his great duties, until a cruel blast sinks thee, with all thy chimerical possessions, into the oblivious grave!"

I know not how long I might have continued my soliloquy, had not a matin bell tolled, and roused me from my meditations. I hastily dressed for the day, and took a charming walk, before any of the family were prepared to breakfast. I sauntered, on my return, into a forlorn garden behind the house, from which I entered the church-yard by a small gate. In a remote corner of this sacred place stood a marble urn, under the shade of a weeping willow: a wreath of sculptured flowers encircled the initials A. L. T. on its pedestal. Many withered lilies and roses were scattered upon the ground, which appeared to have been newly disturbed. As I stood over the tomb, conjecturing the cause of those flowers being there, M. La Tour approached me, and,

as the tears trickled down his cheeks, said, "This is the tomb of my poor daughter Agnes; these are the flowers which the six virgins, who bore her corpse, strewed upon her grave."

I took him by the arm. "Come away, Sir," said I.; and we retired to breakfast. I avoided all reference to his poor Agnes, and turned the conversation upon common-place subjects, in which his family joined. I had not seen them the night before, and was happy to perceive that my society would be select and amiable, consisting of M. La Tour's wife, son, and niece, the last of whom supplied the place of the once lovely and recently deceased daughter. My agreement was to board and lodge with them for twenty-four pounds a-year; and as my half-pay amounted to thirty-three, and my funds in the bank to near three hundred in cash, my mind was relieved from any pecuniary dread, while many years of security and happiness rose

above the horizon before me. To add to my advantages, M. La Tour had, but a few years before, retired from the Swiss Guards; was well acquainted with the court of France; and, previously to his retirement from the world, had collected a well chosen library. He took also every other measure proper for mingling the pleasures of a rural life with those of a man of science and letters.

Here, then, had I fortunately chosen the proper place for weaning my mind from the illicit pleasures of the town; for shewing me that I ought ever to remember I was endowed with an immortal soul; making it my great business to cultivate and improve it, and training myself up for a more exalted state in future. I felt that, while young, I ought to lay in such a stock of knowledge as might qualify me for some high and honourable employment; and that, for this purpose, I should redouble my diligence, endeavouring to acquire a taste for whatever is

beautiful either in sentiment or manners. For though knowledge is useful, as well as ornamental, in life; yet we are not to rest satisfied with any acquisitions we may have made of that kind; we should be still more desirous to acquire those dispositions, with regard to the Deity and our fellow-creatures, which have been inculcated by the first of men. Above all, never should we forget that our life is circumscribed within a narrow period, and exposed to a thousand accidents, which we can neither foresee nor prevent. Ever cheerful, from feeling that I was under the government of a great and good Being, who knows our thoughts, and delights in a pious and upright heart, I resolved to train myself up in my solitude to the practice of virtue; that, when called out of so transitory a state, I might be prepared for those purer and more exalted joys, which God hath reserved for those who love him.

CHAP. XVI.

Finds in rural Life the purest Source of human Happiness.—Visits the Heights of Mellierais.—Contemplates the Beauties of Nature with Warmth.—Ascribes the Merit of Rousseau to the Rocks, the Hills, and Torrents of Vevay.—Repairs to the Village of Clarens.—Anecdotes relative to Rousseau.

MAN is eminently distinguished among the inhabitants of this globe. He derives this distinction from the structure and aspect of his body, and still more from the powers and affections of his mind.

The mind indeed seems to have few ideas at first, and is indebted for these to external objects. But the noble and extensive powers, with which it is endowed, discover themselves by degrees, and render it highly susceptible of improvement. This improvement is closely connected with the perfection and happiness of mankind.

I give myself as an example to

strengthen this moral aphorism. When my mind was darkened by the errors, and corrupted by the vices of great towns, I was miserable as well as mean; but no sooner was it enlightened by knowledge, and formed to virtue in the great school of nature, than I found myself a different being, more capable of ornamenting life, and of opening to myself the truest source of human happiness.

This source was nature. After forming a philosophy of pastime, my greatest pleasure was to ascend the heights of Mellieraie, and thence extend my observation over the whole face of the earth. There is a delusion in all mountains that imposes on the imagination, and gives the mind a stature which it can never attain on level ground. From Mellieraie I surveyed the various generations of mankind, passing, as it were, in review before my eyes.

There I observed the different characters of men; marked their fate; found it

proportioned to their behaviour; discerned the superior advantages of wisdom and virtue, and learned that misfortune and shame are the dismal portion of folly and vice. There I discovered that to sacrifice our intellectual and moral enjoyments, to the lower and more inglorious propensities of our nature, is, in reality, to inflict a heavy punishment on ourselves.

There, likewise, I saw that no acquisition we can make is so fair and so valuable, as a mind enlightened with knowledge, and principled with virtue. There I observed, from my proud and superior eminence, not only the fate of individuals, but also the various revolutions of empires, beholding the conquerors and the conquered swallowed up at length in undistinguishable ruin.

If I looked back but a few years, they, who acted on the theatre of human life, were now no more. What was become, it might be asked, of their deep-laid

schemes, their ambitious projects, their anxious cares, their adored riches, their dazzling honours, their alluring pleasures? Of what consequence to them were all those objects, which so much engrossed their wishes, or exercised their passions? If I looked forward but one century into futurity, where were we ourselves to be? Gone, for ever gone, and the places of our abode would know us again no more.

But it is only to those, who study upon high ground, and upon an extensive scale, that the map of the world affords instruction. From the height on which I stood, I conceived all mankind to be converged within the circle of my horizon, and while I waded through the wars and the vices of men, I was careful to bestow, upon the unhappy actors of those unnatural scenes, that pity which is due to the delusions, as well as that detestation which is due to the vices of mankind. I learned to pass them over with a slighter

glance, and give more particular attention to those objects which were worthy of my approbation and esteem—the civilizers of society, the inventors of useful arts, the friends of liberty and learning, and all those persons whom history records as most eminent for justice, generosity, temperance, fidelity, fortitude, humanity, and public spirit.

What a pity is it, thought I, as I cast my glance over the whole face of the earth, that examples of this sort, in the humbler, as well as the most exalted stations of life, have not been more particularly attended to, and more carefully collected! What a pity is it that they have not been honoured with those monuments which they deserve, and transmitted from age to age for the example of mankind! But this honour is reserved for tyrants and slaughterers. Furnished with a more amiable picture of human nature, and dazzled no longer with the glare of pomp and conquest, we should be

in less danger of deceiving ourselves in our notions of grandeur and of happiness.

Such illustrious patterns of private as well as of public virtue, thus held up for our imitation, would naturally produce in us a glorious emulation, and a heroic desire to promote the most valuable interests of mankind. Hence it appears, that of all the objects which can attract the attention, there is none so interesting as a grand theatre, from which the world can be distinctly anatomized and seen. From Mellieraie I saw the beauties of nature with life and warmth; I saw them forcibly without effort, as the morning sun does the scenes he rises upon; and, in several instances, I saw them with a morning freshness and unaccountable lustre, unknown in the shades of nature. The poet, the statuary, the painter, have produced images that left the vallies far behind; but they never dared to exercise their art on Mount Jura.

There is a truth which cannot be too strongly inculcated: it is, that most people have far more light, judgment, and genius, latent within their breasts, than they are able to draw forth or employ; that the utmost skill and address are requisite to tune those fine springs of the soul, and bring into execution the harmony of which they are capable; and that the perfection of those powers, whatever they be, is the highest degree of improvement which any person's genius can attain.

This moral truth was manifested to me from day to day during my residence in the vicinity of Vevay. I will expose the reason. The ideas of nature are all vast and affecting; and they open to the mind prospects by far more grand than those of artificial life. How does the soul expand to grasp a system of the whole earth! What sublime dignity does an acquaintance with the works of the Almighty bestow upon the human state!

Let a knowledge of nature be thrown out of doors, what can be substituted in its place? Wit, humour, and raillery are pleasing in the levities and play-hours of the soul; but they must not pretend to the admiration which attends on elevation and grandeur of thought.

Enthusiasm, more or less, is an inseparable appendage of nature's study. In moments of this happy kind, I often explored the rocks, the hills, and the torrents, of my delightful neighbourhood. One morning in particular, when I was in a tone of tranquil musing cheerfulness, which fitted me for rising to poetical enthusiasm, I set out at the early hour of five, with Rousseau's Eloisa in my hand. The reader already guesses the purpose of my excursion. Yes, I went to view, with my own eyes, the scenes where the immortal Rousseau has placed the interviews of the fondest and most interesting lovers, whose existence was ever imagined by human fancy.

Rousseau surely owed, to the impression of these beautiful scenes, the tender, pensive, amorous cast of his whole soul. I have mentioned before, that I have gazed on the rocks which had such attractions for Saint Preux, and from which he wrote to his Julia. Why does Rousseau forbid us here to trace the footsteps of the lovers? Unfeeling man! first to give all the power of reality to the wildest but most enchanting dream of fancy, and then coldly to tell us there is nothing at all in it. This is what he does in his confessions: "I would advise any one," says he, "who possesses taste and feeling, to visit Vevay and its environs, and to contemplate the borders of the lake. He will own such scenes to be worthy of Julia and Saint Preux. But, in vain would he attempt to trace the lovers there."

At another time, and under the same influence of enthusiasm, I went along the shore of the lake, to see another par-

ticular scene in the romance, namely, the village of Clarens. Lofty trees, thickly clad with leaves, conceal it from prying eyes till the traveller approaches very near to it. I at last descried a small village under a hill, overgrown with fir-trees. I observed also the residence of Julia, so finely described by Rousseau. It is an old turreted castle; and its exterior appearance sufficiently bespeaks the remoteness as well as barbarism of the time when it was erected.

Many of the inhabitants of Clarens are acquainted with the new Eloisa, and value themselves not a little because the great Rousseau has made their native village the scene of the events recorded in his romance, thus rendering it one of the most famous places in the world. A labouring peasant of this place seeing a stranger contemplate its scenes, approached him, and, smiling, said, "Have not you read the new Eloisa, Sir?" A similar instance occurred to myself at Lustwald, where Julia gave her Saint Preux the

first impassioned kiss of love. An old man there enquired whether I had not read the novel?—But I was sorry to learn from M. La Tour, that, although it was generally understood to have been written at Mellieraie, Rousseau in reality wrote it at the hermitage, and at the distance of only four or five miles from Paris.

Behind the village of Clarens, the waves of the lake are broken on the shore, with a hollow noise, which attempers the soul to pensive melancholy. On my return, I enjoyed, from every part, the noblest prospects imaginable—the bright expanse of the lake of Geneva—the lofty chain of Savoy mountains—the towns and villages scattered round the borders of the lake—Morges, Rolle, Nyon. Whatever charms can vary or decorate a series of scenery, there fill the gazer's eyes. Often, often did I meditate, for hours, with that feeling of calm, yet rapturous joy, which the surrounding scenes are fitted to inspire.

CHAP. XVII.

Begins to grow weary of Groves, Lakes, and Vales.—Meets with Seline, one of the fairest Daughters of Vevay.—Love makes a swift Progress through his Soul.—He plays with the Phantoms of Seline's Imagination.—His plans are fugitive.—Seline eludes his Pursuits.

All mankind, whose common sense is not diverted by system, will agree, that solitude and silence naturally oppress the mind by a tremendous and sublime sensation. It is to avoid this awful feeling that we for ever seek amusement and company, and that any diversion, however insipid and trifling in itself, becomes to us a pleasing relief, merely by occupying our attention.

Reason smiles at the puerility of our amusements. The very slaves of pleasures hold them in contempt, and acknowledge they will not bear examina-

tion: yet the wise and the vain find solitude alike insupportable, and alike desire the company and diversion they despise. The sublime influence of groves, lakes, vales, and solitary study, began gradually to be weakened, yielding to an occasional discontent, or love of change and social enjoyment.

But I reconciled this to myself by the following species of philosophy. Man is ennobled and distinguished from the other inhabitants of this earth by the universal passion for variety. If he were bereft of it, he would fall to the condition of a sagacious brute. He would, in such case, as soon as he had eaten and drank to satisfy nature, lie down on the next sunny bank, and repose in thoughtless content. We should have no heroes, no misers, and no mighty projects. Human love, that now refines and ennobles the soul, would never rise beyond the brutal appetite. Happiness would be cheaply obtained, and we should never be uneasy

except when in actual distress. But then our happiness would be poor and tasteless; and indeed the mere glimmering hope of the obscure enthusiastic delight which we never enjoy, with all its endless cares and disappointments, is infinitely more noble and captivating than the unbroken supine content of sensible enjoyment.

What makes content sound so fine in the human ear, is the satiation of the mighty unknown want, which we are obliged to unite in our idea of content, because without it we can never enjoy undisturbed tranquillity. But this heart-easing, this gilded content, is not the content of brutes; for as they have no desire but to allay the present appetite, their ease is stupid indifference. The annihilation of that bright-beaming human hope, which travels on before us during life, would be attended with a want of curiosity; nothing would be new to us, and nothing old: we should run into few

errors and few cares; we should be wise, content, and worthless. Thus are our misery, our folly, and our grandeur, connected and inseparable.

Hence it was, that at length I frequently abandoned the gloom, solitude, and silence of my fixed abode near the lake, and entered into the spirit of the rural sports, pursued by the young gentry of the neighbourhood, to whom I now became so universally known. Fishing, shooting, and hunting the chamois, were what principally constituted these amusements; and the younger La Tour was my companion whenever I thought proper to go abroad. M. La Tour's son was called Theodore; and he had a friend living not far distant, whose name was De Brie. This was a very fine young man: he spent much of his time in rural sports; and on one occasion, more particularly to be remembered, he proposed a hunting match in the great forest which formed a part of his estate.

His secondary design in this was to carry the company to his own house, where he had provided a handsome entertainment, to celebrate the departure of his sister Seline for a convent, in which it was her determination to take the veil.

Instead of this being her intention, one would have supposed her object to be a desire of appearing agreeable to man: indeed, had this been her motive, her success was greater than would reasonably have been expected. I had seen her once before in a very transient manner; and if the first appearance she made did not finish the conquest of my heart, it was certainly captivated at the very instant I the second time beheld her. Never did love make swifter progress in a soul. Till this time I had never felt a real flame, and I trembled with, as it were, a secret presage of the misfortunes into which I was to be plunged by the sweetest of passions; but the bias of my heart rendered all the reflections that sprung

from this ineffectual. Every moment I continued in her company I found new charms in her appearance, and something so engaging in her conversation, that I remained the most enamoured man in the world.

I must now introduce Seline to the more accurate knowledge of the reader. She was scarcely eighteen years of age; and an exquisitely moulded person was united to one of the most lovely faces I ever gazed upon. Every personal charm of her sex smiled and wantoned in this favoured child of nature. The playful loves dwelt in fond dalliance on her bewitched countenance, and rivetted the attention of all the male part of the company, who were not a little ambitious to be noticed by her, although they knew her resolution of devoting herself to religious seclusion. Her fine azure eyes surpassed the cloudless Indian sky, and her cheek displayed the tropic morn's delicious bloom. The rich vermillion of her lips,

but half concealing the ivory whiteness of her teeth, and decked with fascinating smiles, seemed better adapted to tell a tale of love, than to count the rosary, which now hung as an emblem of her vocation round her snowy neck.

It was my good fortune to sit next her at dinner. After that repast, a proposal was made to take a turn in the garden. I offered my hand to Seline. I was vexed to death at the cruel resolution she had taken to retire from the world. I evinced this vexation, and in the course of the conversation, which I artfully led her into, I employed every argument to counteract her intention. But being fixed in her determination to retire from the world, she rejected all my arguments, and assured me that she did so without making any sacrifice whatever. This hurt my vanity; I had hoped that I should bring her to confess some part of the sentiments I entertained for her; and that at some time I might encourage the idea of being tenderly loved.

The impassioned soul displays resources that surprize by their novelty and greatness. It employs an ingenuity and light which are not within the reach of common reason, and endows us with powers of execution far above our ordinary strength.

The passions are strangely infectious; they lay hold on our affections by violence; they bear us away from a state of indifference, and plunge us into concern and emotion. The mind, that before rested upon itself, selfish and alone, at the appearance of passion, feels in a moment its relation to mankind; it extends its feelings beyond ourselves, and finds itself irresistibly engaged by the interests of others.

I shall leave the application of these opinions to the facts I have now to disclose. Situated and circumstanced as I was, I had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with the lovely Seline; and these happy opportunities were multiplied by the apprehensions entertained

as to the stability of convents, caused by the commencement of that revolutionary storm, which has since desolated the moral and religious world. But after all my efforts, and notwithstanding her stay at home was retarded by the apprehensions alluded to, I could obtain no greater favour from her, than to know that she esteemed me as her brother's friend, or thought me more amiable than other men, merely on that account.

I was not a man to be content with negative merit; I therefore resolved to discover my real power over the heart and mind of Seline, or to perish in the attempt. For this purpose I frequented her society with the utmost assiduity; conversed with her on subjects the most likely to empassion the mind, and read to her such works as were best calculated to display the impression of that love which she had so irrevocably fixed in my own heart.

In the execution of the plan embraced by my system, I had many difficulties to

encounter: in consequence, I found her judgment dormant, her conceptions weak, her ideas few and confused, and her moral principles mere feelings directed by religious prejudice. But in the course of my instruction, how many sources of pleasure were opened in her breast, totally unknown to her before! In reading, she contemplated with admiration the genius displayed in the conduct of the fable. She marked each trait of character, entered into the train of associations by which it was produced, observed how naturally they sprung from the situation of the person described, and perceived how justly the author had pourtrayed the inevitable consequences of the conduct to which they led.

Every sentiment, every moral reflection, attracted her notice, and called forth the powers of judgment. Her vigorous conceptions embraced every idea of the author, and her cultivated mind felt all the exquisite emotions of taste, or

was filled with the fondest ideas of imaginary bliss. One day after dinner we walked out to indulge in our favourite topics. Our excursion terminated at a rock, the base of which was washed by the waters of the lake. It was one of those fine days in May, when the cool of the evening brought on a refreshing sweetness. We sat down to rest, and enjoy the prospect of the lake, that stretched before us beyond the limits of the eye.

The sun was just setting, and his last softening beams, flying to the shore, seemed to dip into a thousand waves, and leave in the waters the blaze they lost. We had been conversing on the subject of her exclusion from the world on our way to the lake; and after we had been seated some time, still occupied by the same melancholy idea, I took her gently by the hand, and said, in reply to one of her observations: "What, Seline, will you at eighteen years of age, adored by the most faithful lover in the world, and

crowned with all the blessings nature can bestow, will you retire to solitude, and deprive yourself of all the pleasures that love promises you? The death, which so cruel a resolution will give me, is what I do not consider, nor do I so much as pretend to inspire you with any compassion for my pains; I only beg you would pity yourself." She here interrupted me. "I know well how much it will cost me," answered she; "for after my owning to you that I esteem you, I need not conceal my fears, lest that esteem for you should be my punishment. But I was not born to be happy," continued the amiable Seline. "My heart has been long accustomed to suffer, it can only now know a change of pain, and be the victim of sentiment, having been before the prey of grief and despair."

"But why," resumed I in a tone the most impassioned, "why do you inform me that you esteem me, since you resolve to yield nothing to that esteem?

How barbarous it is in you to oppress, to tear, to ruin me utterly! Is this the part of one who esteems? Have I, who adore you, and would die to save you from the slightest injury, deserved this?"—"Well, then," exclaimed she, with more than her usual energy, "learn to hate me, for your hatred will conform more to my quiet than your love. Never view me but in a light that may make me disagreeable in your eyes. Consider me as insensible to your attentions, and unequal to your station in life, as a maid without fortune, without hopes. And you may add to this, that my heart has been a prey to grief from my tenderest years; and, alas! how ill suits that with love! After it has experienced the severities of fortune, how can it prove the tenderness of passion? No, look upon me as insensible, and as one who imposes upon you, when she tells you that she thinks you amiable. Cure yourself of your passion, and let

me fly to solitude, there to conceal my esteem, my grief, and my misfortune."

Seline pronounced these words in so touching a manner, that I regarded her for some moments with a pensive and disconsolate air. But considering on a sudden that she inflicted severities, and inspired despair, with a view to excite desire, and to encourage hope, I seized her in my arms, and impressed a thousand burning kisses on her lips. The violence with which she extricated herself from my embrace, the tumultuous agitations of her breast, and the lightning that flashed from her eyes, soon convinced me that I was grievously deceived in the fallacious opinion I entertained. She uttered no reproaches, but she suddenly rose to depart. I threw myself on my knees to stop her. She would hear nothing, but turned on her heel and passed towards home. I walked by her side, a silent spectator of all her agitations.

On our arrival, she immediately retired to her apartment, and I left the house nearly as soon, aggravating her cruelty, calling her insensible and inhuman; yet, after wasting all my sighs and reproaches, owning that she was the most amiable creature ever formed by heaven or beheld upon earth.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Tide of Virtue flows in the Bosom of Seline, and he tries in vain to achieve his Object.—Virtue triumphs.—He cannot bear to live, and is unfit to die.

THE repulse I met with neither extinguished curiosity nor suppressed hope. On the contrary, I applied all my endeavours to one point, which was that of conquest and triumph. The first step was to seek an interview with Seline. This indulgence was denied me for some time; and when I was admitted into her presence, the sight was so affecting, that I was unable to judge of the real situation of her heart and mind. As I entered the saloon, she supported her head with her hand, her elbow leaning on a table, and had a handkerchief in the same hand, with which she endeavoured to wipe

away some tears that dropped from her eyes.

I sat down by her, holding her other hand clasped within mine, and said every thing that the reader can conceive possible to effect a confidential reconciliation, and inspire an impassioned love. For a moment I was all hope. When she no longer could hide her blushes, or the paleness that seized her as I pressed her hand to my lips—when I saw love dancing in her eyes, and her false heart beat with rapid motions—when I saw soft trembling palsy every limb, then I thought myself no longer obliged to restrain my passion. But on the first trifling liberty I took, a sudden glance of honour fell upon me from her indignant eye, and made me again repent.

"Hold, Sir!" exclaimed Seline, while the tide of virtue flowed in upon her: "hold! and forget not that I am daughter to the great Beralti, and sister to Octavio, your friend. Remember that I am an

unspotted maid; and that if you can set no higher value upon me than poor base prostitution, you had better retire from my acquaintance, and never see me more. Remember, too," continued the exalted girl, "that it is in vain you think to obtain the glory of conquest over one, who has been taught to know that when a woman falls from virtue, she exceeds mankind in the flagrancy of her crimes. Oh, how many pangs would your inglorious passion cost the great, unfortunate house of Beralti, were you to make way to it through the heart of the wretched Seline!"—As she concluded these words, she hastily rose, and, with an agitated precipitancy, left the apartment, not even bidding me farewell.

I shall not go into a detail of my own sufferings or sensations. The reader must perceive that I played away my heart at a game I did not understand. Honour, which I had almost vanquished, revived and warred against me; and

Seline, who so nearly resolved to love, by an inconstancy natural to her sex, or rather from virtuous fears, turned over to honour's side, and left me a slave to disappointment and contempt. Thus the despairing man stands on the river's bank, designing to plunge into the rapid stream; till, cowardly fear seizing his timorous soul, he views around once more the flowery plains, and looks with wishing eyes back to the groves; then, sighing, stops, and cries, "I was too rash!" forsakes the dangerous shore, and hastes away.

In all human terrors the soul loses its dignity; and, as it were, shrinks below its usual size: but by the terror of love, although it be always awful, the soul of man seems to be raised out of a trance; it assumes an unknown grandeur; it is seized with a new appetite, that in a moment effaces its former little prospects and desires; it is rapt out of the sight and consideration of this diminutive world,

into a kind of gigantic creation: it overlooks the Apennines, and the clouds upon them, and sees nothing in view around it, but immense objects.

In the poet's language, it flies, it soars, it pursues a beauty in the madness of rapture, that words or description cannot contain; and if these expressions be extravagant and improper in the ordinary commerce of life, they yet exactly describe the intellectual and real state of the mind at the presence of a combated passion. At first, it is indeed true, like a weak mortal, the conduct of Seline reduced me to a momentary state of despair and impotency. In this torment, unable to hide my disorder, on my return home, I retired to rest at an early hour; but the restless agonies of the night exceeded those of the day, and were not even by myself to be expressed. The returning light, however, brought a short slumber upon its wings; and I awoke from dreams more agreeable than all my watchful

hours could bring; for they were all tortured, and even the softest mixed with a thousand despairs, difficulties, and disappointments.

Winged with these delusive dreams, I flew to the habitation of the innocent Seline. I was informed that she had but the moment before gone across the mountains to the village of Clarens. I instantly resolved to follow her. "Seline shall now be mine," said I. "In shades and gloomy lights, the phantom honour vanishes. In silent groves and grottos, dark alcoves, and lonely recesses, all its formalities are laid aside. It is then and there Seline will yield. With a faint struggle, and a soft resistance, I shall hear her broken sighs, her tender whispering voice, that trembling will say—'Oh! can you be so cruel? Have you the heart? Will you ruin Seline because she loves you? Oh! will you ruin Seline because you may?' Then will she,

sighing, yield, and make me happier than a triumphant god!"

With these cruel and ambitious hopes, I hastily set off for Clarens, pursuing the path taken by Seline. I at length came in sight of her; but did not approach or accost her. I was content to observe her with minute attention. As she came to a mountain that rose high on the left, she found she had strayed from her road, and might observe other mountains rising in strange confusion—the furthest off almost lost in the distance, yet great in the obscurity. I saw her pause. Her imagination laboured to travel over them; and the inhabitants, no doubt, appeared to her as if they resided in another world. She pursued her walk; but here she had a different prospect. The next mountain covered all the rest from her view; and, by its nearer approach, presented distinctly to her eye objects of new admiration.

The rocks on its sides met the clouds

with vast irregularity. Her pensive eye traced the rugged precipice down to the bottom, and surveyed there the mighty ruins, which time had mouldered and tumbled below. It was easy for me to distinguish that Seline was terrified and silenced into awe, at these vestiges of immense power; and the more manifest were the appearances of disorder, the more plainly she felt the boundless might these rude monuments are owing to. But, beside this silent fear, I found her curiosity roused from the deepest springs in her soul, on reaching the highest boundary of the lake, and perceiving that it was disturbed and agitated in storms; while the forests of its banks roared and bent under the force of a tempest, though the summit on which she stood refused to yield to its destructive power, and remained in awful deep serenity.

This calm grandeur, this sublime distinction, was not of long duration. The storm suddenly rose above the unmea-

sured eminence. Thunder, with broken bursts of lightning, through black clouds, appalled the heart of the timid Seline; and as I advanced towards her, offering my arm, she appeared frightened and faint, ready to fall to the earth, prostrate before the genius of such immense and terrific power.

She uttered an exclamation of apprehension on seeing me, but did not refuse my arm. I felt obscure hopes and obscure fears. "Nay, tremble not," said I, "nor fear this fond pursuit. I dare not speak of love. To you, alas! I know it is painful now.—Enough. All heaven, in darkness, threatens another storm. What! are you not afraid, Seline? Observe the blackening sky. See how the winds arise in maddening whirls, scatter the dust, and high uprear the leaves, which, darkly withering, lately strewed the ground. Judge by the sullen roaring of the woods; the wild disordered flutter of the birds, and by the tears that

trickle down your cheeks. Too well presaged.—Dear Seline, look; alas! the lightning darts, the thunder rolls."

She started, and looked around with affright. The scene was awful. The billows of a cataract, flung themselves down with eternal rage, the agitation of the lake was excessive, and the summits of all the mountains were clad with frowning clouds. On one side only was there any security: it was offered by a cavern in the rock on which we stood.—"Haste," continued I, pointing to this retreat,

Haste!—reach the shelter of yon friendly cave;
And I will watch you, as the whirlwinds rave.

But still, my angel, still you fear;
And still your heart throbs high.—
Nay, do not tremble; I am near,
* * * * * * * * * * *
I mock these flashes, whilst with you,
Exult amid the thunder's roar;
And when the storm subsides, adieu!
Ungrateful maid, to meet no more!

With gentle violence, I drew her towards the cave, and continued—

> Here sit, here rest secure,
> The lightning never pierced this cavern's gloom.
> Thick groves of pendent umbrage swell around,
> And numerous laurels stretch their branching shades
> To bound the darting fire!
> Sit, my fair Seraph, calmly here respire.

"You seem alarmed, and creep close to me as if you would arrest my flight—you grasp my hand.—Forbear; forbear to doubt. Though heaven be hurled in dreadful ruin down, I will not move. For this delicious hour oft have I longed in vain. Ah sacred bliss, were but your tremors those of tender love!—Ah, Seline! let me nurse this sweet, this dear delusion. What! who knows but you have loved me? Your scornful frowns reluctantly, perhaps, arose from coyness,

and not from cold disdain: and, haply, love now feigns excessive fear.

"What say you, Seline? Answer.—Ah! you pause as if perplexed. You turn away your tell-tale eyes abashed—you blush—you sweetly smile.—Enough! enough! What modesty conceals, that angel-look, that virgin blush, reveals. Here, while the tempest rules the night, and howls along the waste, taste I serenest calm, nor wish the blithe return of light! Though darkness wraps the sky, to me this shines the brightest day. Oh! may my life thus glide away, thus happy may I die!"

At the conclusion of these words, in which the reader will perceive I was amply provided from *La Tempesta del Metastasio*, and which I had previously translated for the amusement of Seline, the different sentiments which actuated her soul were so violent, that her eyes rushed full of tears. "Ah, Ashe," cried she, "at length you are master of my

life; but do not suffer me to undergo a thousand deaths, by heaping upon me a load of dishonour too dreadful to endure. I cannot lose my virtue but with loss of life. I love you, I confess. If you love me, respect that virtue which alone I prize." She here fell on her knees, and with uplifted hands besought me. But she had no occasion. A sudden sense of honour enlightened my understanding. I raised her from the earth, and conducted her to Clarens, where I left her with this expression. "Oh! what fate is reserved for me! For thus I cannot bear to live; and surely I am far from being fit to die."

CHAP. XIX.

The Traveller floats in an Ocean of Doubt and Uncertainty.—Seline retires to a Convent.—He laments her Loss.—Disappointment the Parent of Wisdom.—It rouses his Soul to a salutary Activity.—He becomes the Friend of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.—Consequences of that Friendship.

THE Greeks, the fathers of thought and sublime knowledge, always nicely observed the difference between the native powers of the mind over its stock of sensible ideas, and the sublime influence to which it was passive.

They traced the latter through its several appearances, and never failed to attribute it to divine power. It was so with me. At first doubtful as to the motive of my generous conduct towards the amiable Seline, I divided it out, according as my imagination happened to be struck, and to the concomitant in-

ternal ideas; but I finally acknowledged a supernatural interposition, and thanked God that the crime of seduction was not again laid upon my head. Still I knew not how to act. The small portion left to Seline, by her father, was to be forfeited if she did not take refuge in a convent for life. For myself, I had eternally offended my father, and had nothing to depend on but an ensign's half-pay. To marry her was ridiculous; to seduce her a crime! Those were my opinions; and such was my situation: the inevitable fate of coquetry and vice.

I was floating in this ocean of tumult and perplexity, when I received the following note from Seline:—"Being irrevocably fixed in my design of retiring from the world, I bid you farewell. Do not oppose me. Let me bury myself in solitude; for that is the only course now left to me. I am not formed for society. Such were my resolves before I became acquainted with you. They are not

changed; but I know not whence it is, that my heart entertains sentiments, to which it ought to be a stranger. I have not even been able to disguise them from you. How feeble are we rendered by love! However, I own that it is you alone who could touch me; and in whatever manner Heaven shall dispose of me, I perceive that you will be always dear to my heart.

"But, notwithstanding this acknowledgment, which shews so much weakness, I have still strength enough to tell you, that my first reasons make more impression upon me than all my tenderness. I am sensible how much I forfeit by losing you, but I am persuaded that my future repose demands this sacrifice. You thought that you would remove my difficulties, after your generous conduct at the time of the tempest; but these are the very motives that seal my resolution. I am incapable of flattering myself; and I well know, that a little beauty, and

some other feeble attractions about me, can never make up my defects in point of fortune. So amiable a man was not born for Seline Beralti. I well know what glory, and even love requires of me. I will not disturb the course of your fortune; nor will I be a hindrance to those great alliances that wait on your merit and worth. Farewell, Sir; never see me more, for it never can contribute to your happiness. You will only increase my infelicity, and hasten the moment of my retreat. Farewell! I cannot conceal the tears that drop from my eyes. Farewell!"

A thunderbolt from Heaven could not have struck me with more confusion and surprise than the receipt of this extraordinary and unexpected letter. On my recovery, I replied to it in a few incoherent lines:—"Would so amiable a woman wish for the death of the man she esteemed? My life depended upon one word under her hand! I loved with a

passion greater than ever man loved. I threw my heart at her feet, and conjured her to accept it. If she would not hear me, to what despair should I be reduced! I was no longer myself. Life had no pleasure for me, &c. &c." But this reached the hands of the innocent Seline too late. She had previously departed for her convent; and I felt the heart-rending conviction that she was at once beloved, admired, and lost!

Disappointment is the parent of wisdom. It is disappointment only that can produce "common sense," which is sterling in every region; the current coin equally useful to the high and to the low, to the learned and the unlearned. It is ever in requisition, ever necessary; nor can all the stores of wit and knowledge, nor all the artificial stimuli to the imagination, compensate for its absence.

When I recovered, in some degree, from the severe disappointment caused by the fatal and fixed resolution of the lovely

lost Seline, and when I discovered the entire futility of endeavouring to see her more, I turned with averted eyes from the borders of the Lake of Geneva, and began to compare the town with the country, in regard to their respective advantages for the acquisition of knowledge. How stood the comparison? I have already said much in praise of the country; but, on comparison, I found its charms feeble.

The town is the region where all the energies of true virtue are naturally called into an exercise the most strenuous and invigorating. It is where temptations to vice and crimes assail in so many winning forms, and with such giant force, to drag away the soul, that even negative innocence cannot be maintained without heroic virtue. Here you mingle in crowded society; and how difficult the task, but how noble the virtue, to check those malignities and disgusts, and self-preferences, which even amid the com-

petitions of true merit, and of social excellence, are for ever springing up in every heart! Here only is the activity of genius and of industry fully exerted.

In town, too, while you walk abroad, amid a field of human misery, at every step you move, all the generous benignities are assailed with a force sufficient to create tenderness and compassion in the very breast of apathy and selfishness. Here, in short, all the human affections are kept in full play; and man is at once enfeebled and strengthened by being reduced into the most implicit dependence on human aid, yet rendered thus even ten times more powerful over nature and fortune, than while he was accustomed to stand sullenly aloof from the rest of the world, and to confide only in the inventions of his own mind, and in the vigour of his own single arm. Yes, yes, argued I, after my cruel disappoint-

ment, if I be too feeble for the exertions of active virtue, let me hide myself among the mountains of Switzerland; but if my soul be not incapable of those energies, which are the best pride of our nature, let me rather mingle in the busy life of the town.

These elements of comparison were no sooner formed, than I took leave of my good friend M. la Tour, and repaired to Lausanne, intending to consult with my friend, Mr. Gibbon, and some other valuable acquaintances, whom I had the happiness to form there, on my future mode of life, and on the town and the country most favourable to the extent of my instruction and the contracted state of my means. In noticing the extent of my instruction, it is proper I should remark, that during my stay at M. la Tour's, I passed through a regular course of French, Italian, and German literaturæ, historical and geographical know-

ledge, scientific and astronomical calculations, and political, theological, and moral controversy. The place of my residence was more doubtful than the question of talents and attainments. A revolution, like the sweep of a whirlwind, was passing over France, while it threatened likewise to ravage all the neighbouring states and territories. I had an insuperable objection to England, because of my debts contracted in Ireland. Finally I resolved on going to Brussels, and there seeing in what manner I could live or assist my half-pay, which I continued regularly to receive.

In this determination I was biased by Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a young nobleman whom I met with at Lausanne, and who honoured me with his friendship to such a height, that he proposed to take me in his carriage all the way to Brussels free of expense, if I would accompany him on foot in an excursion

among some of the most mountainous cantons in Switzerland. I eagerly embraced this flattering proposition, anxiously longing for the moment when I should depart, and find my soul again roused to salutary activity.

CHAP. XX.

Sets out with Lord Edward upon a Pedestrian Tour.—Curiosity excited at the opening of new Scenes.—Historical Anecdote.—Tribute to Lord Edward.—Visit to a Convent.—Hinders Pamela, the Daughter of the Duke of Orleans, from taking the Veil.—Description of a sainted Vestal.

WHEN our curiosity is excited at the opening of new scenes, our ideas are affecting, and beyond life; so that we see objects in a brighter hue than they afterwards appear in: for when curiosity is sated, the objects grow dull, and our ideas fall to their diminutive natural conformity.

What I have said may account for the raptured prospect of our youth. Novelty always recommends, because expectations of the unknown are ever high; and in youth we have an eternal novelty. In-

experienced credulity gilds our young ideas, and imparts to every thing a fresh lustre, which is not yet alloyed by doubts. With this species of curiosity it was that Lord Edward Fitzgerald and I set out upon our pedestrian tour. Youth strewed our wayward path with blossoms; but now that my imagination is cooled by age, I cannot recollect what flowers I met with that are worthy of the reader's regard.

I shall present but one or two; more because they serve to adorn the character of my late noble friend, than from any intrinsic beauty they otherwise possess. We first repaired to Berne. The way passes through a garden, one of the finest I have ever seen. The trees on both sides bend under the weight of the rich fruits with which they are overcharged; and the golden grain waves over the fields where they spread out to a wider distance. It was a holiday. The peasants, in their best attire, were making merry

in the houses of public entertainment, smoking their pipes, carousing with wine, and joyously shouting through the air, "Thus lives the jolly Switzer."

As we passed the town of Murten, our guide, who carried a change of clothes, asked, "Would you not chuse to see the remains of our enemies?"—"Where?" "Here, to the left." We followed his steps, and through a large iron trellising saw a heap of human bones. Their origin was this: Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, was one of the most powerful princes of his time, and personally one of the most daring and heroic. But his ambition made him the constant terror of his neighbours, and a scourge to the human race.

In the year 1746, he determined to make war on the Swiss cantons, and to crush their proud liberties under the iron sceptre of tyranny. His army marched. Their banners blazed in the sky; and the earth groaned under the

movements of their engines and artillery. The troops of Burgundy were drawn out in array on the banks of the lake, and Charles looked with envious eye towards the vales of Switzerland, already counting them his own. But at once the signal was given, and the alarm pervaded all Switzerland. "The enemy approaches!" was the general cry. The peaceful shepherds left the cottages and their flocks; seized their battle axes and spears; assembled thus armed; and, while the love of their country swelled their hearts, rushed down like the Alpine torrent, upon those hosts of foes that menaced the passes of their hills.

Charles's cannon played upon the Swiss: but they came on unappalled. The Burgundian ranks were broken, and their fire was silenced. The duke himself plunged on horseback into the lake, and his stout courser conveyed him safe to the further shore. A few trusty servants were the attendants of his flight.

He was reserved to perish afterwards by his own hand. Looking back to the field of carnage, out of which he had escaped, and beholding the general slaughter of his army, he indignantly cried: "Shall I be such a dastard as to survive their fall?" and with a pistol put an end to his existence.

The Swiss afterwards gathered up the bones of their slaughtered enemies, and deposited them together in a heap, which still remains there. I, for my part, exulted in this triumph of liberty; but, although Lord Edward was an innate and professed lover of freedom, it was not so with him. He shuddered at the sight of such a monument of the errors and miserable mortality of man. "And you men of Switzerland," exclaimed his Lordship, "how can you behold with exultation such trophies as these? Were not the Burgundians your brethren of humanity? Why should not the remains of these thirty-thousand

Burgundians have been watered with your tears; committed with decent solemnity to earth, and dishonoured with no other monument than that on a simple funeral structure should have been inscribed, in honour of the conquerors, this brief memorial.—'Here fought the Swiss for their country: they record their victory, but they mingle tears with their songs of triumph!'—"Oh!" continued his Lordship, "had you, men of Switzerland, done thus, then might your glory have been pure, and your triumph fitted to command the sympathy of every generous heart. But hide, oh hide this monument of barbarous ferocity in triumph; and when you boast of the proud name of Switzer, remember there is one yet far more honourable—that of man!"

I must abandon this theme for the present. The noble subject of it is no more. He was carried off in the prime of his life, and deemed a traitor to his God and his country. Yet God never endowed

man with a better heart than his. Blessed be his memory!

We know not the bounds of pleasure, because we are unacquainted with the extent and boundaries of the human intellect. The mind in ignorance is like a sleeping giant; it has immense capacities without the power of using them. By listening to the letters of Socrates, men grew heroes, philosophers, and legislators; for he, of all mankind, seemed to have discovered the short and lightsome path to the faculties of the mind.

To give an instance of the human capacity, that comes more immediately within our notice, what sentiments of pleasure did Lord Edward and I experience in our tour through the mountainous cantons of Switzerland! And to what must these sentiments be attributed?—To an expansion of mind; which enabled us to see two different natures laying claim to us, and dragging us different ways. We saw a necessity that arose from our former

situation and circumstances, bending us down into unworthy misery and sordid baseness; and we saw, when we had escaped from the insulting tyranny of our fate, and had acquired ease and freedom from travel, a generous nature that lay stupified and oppressed, beginning to awake and charm us with new prospects of beauty and glory.

Directed by this waking genius, we gazed in rapture on the beauties and elevated scenes of nature. The beauties of nature are familiar, and charm us like a mother's bosom; and the objects in Switzerland, which have the plain marks of immense power and grandeur, raised in us a still, an inquisitive, and trembling delight. We before believed that genius often threw over the objects of its descriptions colours finer than those of nature, and opened a paradise that existed no where but in its own creations. We once thought the bright and peaceful scenes of Arcadia, and the lovely de-

scriptions of pastoral poetry, never existed on earth any more than Pope's shepherds, or the river Gods of Windsor Forest; that it was all a charming illusion, which the mind first painted in celestial colours, and then confided in. But in the course of our excursion, we discovered the reality of those amazing beauties, whose very shadow glimmering, upon the poet's imagination, conveyed to it indescribable raptures, and elevated it with enthusiastic pleasure.

In my quality of biographer, I cannot descend to local exactness: it is sufficient that I distinguish the objects I offer to view, by some general lines, and make them move the reader by the enlivening sensations that touch us by sympathy. The poet, who calls the imagination to his beloved groves and chrystal springs, does not distinguish his trees into oak, ash, or elm; he shews them neither regularly nor in confusion; nor does he measure the windings of his streams, and

mark out the fords, the shallows, and depths. He just mentions the rural scene, and then proceeds to paint the engaging image of calm content, and easy unsurfeiting joys, that are not objects of sense, and yet are the real objects of beauty.

But however little it may be my province to dilate upon particular description, that has no absolute analogy with my own general history, I should not think myself justified in an omission of the following incident or local circumstance. It would appear, that previously to Lord Edward's residence in Switzerland, he had resided in France, and for a sufficient time to form the most pure and fixed attachment for Pamela, the natural daughter of the Duke of Orleans, afterwards surnamed Egalité. The attachment was an imprudent one; and the Duke, dreading its termination, sent Pamela out of the kingdom, instructing the governess to whom he confided her

to place her at a convent in Switzerland, and after her novitiate, to see her made a permanent sister of the nunnery. The place of her retreat was kept a profound secret, nor could all the ingenuity and research of his Lordship discover any thing more than the broad fact above stated.

The frequent agitation and abstraction of Lord Edward's mind convinced me that he had a silent sorrow there which he wished to conceal, or of which he feared the discovery. Whatever it was, I respected it, and perhaps never should have known its nature, had it not been, that, after several days travelling, our undirected steps brought us to the convent of Vilvere. The deep-toned bell, and the vestured saints that attended the shrine within the grating, announced the hour of orisons to be near. We entered the chapel just as the curtain was drawn from the front of the vestal gallery. It had before concealed the nuns from the

observation of the spectators below; and now one of these lovely victims attracted much of the public attention. A veil of the purest white, which swept with graceful folds to the ground, fell from her head. A crown of thorns encircled her brow. Trembling with tears, her soft blue eyes shone like the moon before the storm; now bright, now dark, now dim. She seemed an angel at the shrine; and, as with pious rapture she kissed the cross, the solemn organ pealed to the skies, and filled the mind with the delusions of a dream.

The scene now changed, and we had a nearer view of this interesting object. She was conducted to an altar in the chapel, which was covered with cloth of the blackest hue. She knelt—her gentle bosom heaved—the lily usurped her cheek. The sigh, repressed by piety, spoke resignation to her fate. The expecting crowd gazed on the maid, and a moan escaped from every breast. From

this we learned, that for the sweet victim the sacred shrine was thus decked out. She rose from prayer; and, with tremulous voice, was about to make the vows by which she would have engaged herself to quit the world for ever, and live immured within the cloister's shade, when Lord Edward approached the base of the altar, and snatching out of her hands the scroll from which she intended to recite her vows, the dove-like eyes of Pamela now viewed, for the first time in Switzerland, her Lord Edward's face!

Oh, faithful found! what joy in grief! The parchment was torn, and the happy Fitzgerald pressed the trembling Pamela to his tender breast. An awful silence now ensued. Pale terror overspread the face of the abbess. It reigned a moment, and was chased by one loud burst of vengeance: "Go to thy cell, and hide thee there!" cried she to the affrighted victim; but all pitied and admired the pair, earnestly wishing to know their

story. Besides, the holy benediction was not given—the last solemn vow not taken. What was the abbess to do? Violence she durst not use. She strove for speech, but it was in vain. Pamela appealed to the people, and declared that she was about to take the veil through tyranny, not by choice; that she was betrothed to Lord Edward, and had no other desire than that of leaving the convent, and of giving her hand to him.

The times were favourable to the lovers; for the discipline of the convents was much relaxed. The abbess was soon brought to her senses, and a handsome bribe from Lord Edward procured him access to her parlour, where he saw his beloved Pamela when he pleased, and where he negociated with her father that treaty, which effected his marriage with the object of his affections, thus allying him to the royal house of France.

CHAP. XXI.

Leaves Switzerland, and enters France.—Contrast between France and England.—Arrives at Paris.—Anticipates a Storm of Revolutions and popular Outrage.—Separation from Lord Edward.—Removes from Paris to Maestricht.—Is appointed Governor to the Children of Prince Frederick of Hesse.—Portraiture of a German Court.

NATURE, that bestows her favours without respect of persons, often denies to the great the capacity of distinguished elegance, and flings it away in obscure villages. It is sometimes seen at a country fair, spreading an amiableness over a sun-burnt girl, like the moon through a mist; and she as often excites the admiration of the peer, as the hope and jealousy of the rustic.

This sentiment was the last I entertained on leaving the borders of Switzerland. There is no great opulence and

munificence, no splendid establishments, no commerce, no immense capital embarked in the structure of docks, roads, harbours, and canals, no Lloyd's Coffee Rooms, India House, or Stock Exchange; but there is a high state of cultivation and civilization, as well as comfort and cheerfulness among all ranks, which are the best and proudest proofs of national prosperity, a satisfied population, and a wise system of government.

On leaving this charming country, with many regrets of the heart, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, contrary to my wish, required me to accompany him through France. I did so; and, in the course of three months (travelling post,) visited all the large towns, and every object of curiosity throughout that magnificent country.—We also encountered numerous adventures; but as they were more immediately connected with my noble companion than myself, I cannot think them fit for individual history. I only mention

the circumstance of going to France at this period, to shew the reader what opportunities I had of seeing the world, studying mankind, and acquiring knowledge.

Paris indeed was a grand school of knowledge. Ingenuous curiosity was there excited by every means that could possibly be devised. It was there that I readily found all those media of informations, by the living voice, by books, by the sight of numberless assemblages of various objects of art, which improve the taste, and store the intellect with science. How many regions might I have travelled over ere I had met with half those establishments of ingenuity, those specimens of objects in nature, those exhibitions of languages and manners, which Paris alone, within its narrow compass of a few miles, could furnish! While I was fixed on the mountains of Switzerland, if at a loss for any one piece of information, however simple, in a series

of researches, I had to pause for months, before I was able, by correspondence, and inquiries, and new readings, and possibly long journies, or tedious experiments, to obtain that article of information which I wanted. But to the student in Paris, such a desideratum may be at any time, and within a few hours, supplied.

Besides, there is, in the continual collision of minds, and the reciprocal comparison of characters at such a place as Paris, something that, in the most powerful and eminent manner, contributes to invigorate our reasoning powers, and to give the intellect a ready command of whatever knowledge it may have acquired in the schools. This conclusion I drew from my residence in the country and in town. Those pleasures, of which the perfection consists in their native delicacy, simplicity, and suitableness to the natural character of man, are to be sought in the country. It is the situation for

easy abstinence from vice; the town presents the field for the sublime, the arduous, and the heroic virtues. The elementary knowledge is best acquired in rural retirement; the town is the scene of fervour in scientific and moral inquiry, and of all those efforts by which art and knowledge are the most successfully advanced.

It was not, however, possible for me to leave France without observing that small black spot on the distant horizon, which was to generate a storm of unbridled, licentious and ferocious anarchy; a storm of incessant revolutions and popular outrage; of moral depravity, and dissoluteness of manners; of wanton bloodshed, and worse than savage cruelty; of impiety and atheism; a storm which was certain to bring, as subordinate evils in its train, the destruction of commerce, the annihilation of credit, the extinction of arts and manufactures, and all the horrors of indigence, famine, and disease;

a storm, in short, that would render earth a hell, and existence a curse.

The human genius, with the best assistance, and the finest examples, breaks forth but slowly; and the greatest men have but gradually acquired a just taste, and chaste simple conceptions of beauty.

At an immature age, the sense of beauty is weak and confused, and requires an excess of colouring to catch its attention. We then prefer extravagance and rant to justness; a gross false wit to the engaging light of nature; and the shewy, rich, and glaring, to the fine and amiable.

This is the childhood of taste: but as the human genius strengthens, and grows to maturity, the sense of universal beauty awakens; it begins to be disgusted with the false and misshapen deceptions that pleased before, and rests with delight on elegant simplicity, on objects of natural beauty, and unaffected grandeur.

These opinions were impressed upon

my mind in proportion as I advanced in years, but more particularly on my removal from Paris to Maestricht; a circumstance which took place in consequence of my friend Lord Edward Fitzgerald having to pass through that town. Finding, on our visit to court, that a master of languages was wanted in the family of Prince Frederick of Hesse, then Governor of Maestricht, his Lordship recommended me to that humble situation, and I obtained it in the most gracious manner that it could possibly be conferred.

At this amiable little court I experienced the humiliating conviction that I was destitute of the extended genius and purity of taste which I have alluded to; but at the same time I had the consolation of perceiving that I had fixed my residence in the very place, which was most likely to confer upon me the qualities and ornaments I so much wished for, and deplored the want of. The

governor was a most learned and distinguished character; the Princess of Hesse was one of the most lovely and exalted women I ever beheld; and their court boasted several of the most accomplished personages of the German states.

The mornings were uniformly devoted to the study of languages, poetry, music, painting, and even sculpture. The princess instituted for the evening frequent public assemblies, where the men of genius, the idle, and opulent, who had leisure for reflection, met regularly; amongst other decisions, to judge of works of taste, particularly dramatic productions. In these noble assemblies, there was no common prejudice, but in favour of what was really beautiful. The universal judgment was therefore always right, and could be no other than the common universal taste of improved nature: for we are never to forget, that, although taste may be overwhelmed by prejudice, it is never totally lost.

Concerts and operas were other great sources of the evening's amusements at the court; and surely there are few who have not felt the charms of music, and acknowledged its expressions to be instructive to the heart: for music is a language directed to the passions, and awakens some which we perceive not in ordinary life. The effect of this court system was very manifest. It elevated the character of the men, and bestowed on the women a degree of elegance, which no other mode of life could possibly bestow.

Elegance, the most undoubted offspring and visible image of fine taste, is universally admired the moment it appears. Men disagree about the other constituent parts of beauty; but they all unite, without hesitation, in acknowledging the power of elegance. The general opinion is, that this most distinguished part of beauty, which is perceived and acknowledged by every body, is yet utterly inexplicable,

and retires from our search, when we would discover what it is.

Where shall I find the secret retreat of the graces, to explain the elegance they dictate, and to paint, in visible colours, the fugitive and varying enchantment that hovers round a graceful person, yet leaves us for ever in agreeable suspense and confusion? I need not ask. The graces are but emblems of the human mind, in its loveliest appearances; and while I remember the Princess of Hesse and the ladies of her court, it is impossible not to feel their influence.

CHAP. XXII.

He is attached to the House of Hesse.—Accompanies the Princess of Brunswick.—Becomes acquainted with the Genius and Character of the Princess of Wales.—Origin of a Court intrigue.—Angelica, a Court Beauty, patronizes our Hero.—She obtains for him a Lieutenancy in the Brunswickers.—He describes the Duke's Campaign in France.—Is created Captain, and serves as Aid de Camp to his Serene Highness.

WHAT pleases man, generally appears beautiful. Complaisance is engaging, gives an agreeableness to the whole person, and creates a charm that nature gave not to the features; it submits, it promises, it applauds, in the countenance. The heart lays itself in smiles at the feet, and a voice that is indulgent and tender is always heard with pleasure and regard.

I was naturally inclined to love the House of Hesse, because they had an affection for me. By this weakness they

attacked me; and so great was my veneration for the whole family, that I would have as soon thought of losing my life as of leaving their service. Nor was it by any means a situation of servitude. I had frequent access to the table of the prince, and was of every party they either went to, or formed at their own court. I had also the honour of attending the princess on several of her excursions with the young prince, my first pupil; and, on one particular occasion, I passed six weeks at Brunswick. By such means I acquired much of that information respecting the genius and character of the Princess of Wales, which the reader may see embodied in a work subsequently composed by me, and entitled, "The Spirit of the Book; or, Memoirs of Caroline Princess of Hasbourgh." In short, the time I passed at the Court of Maestricht, was the most delightful period of my life. I yet view it distinctly; but it sinks and escapes, like the dissolving

ideas of a delightful dream, that are neither within the reach of the memory, nor yet totally fled.

I was in a truly enlightened and amiable family; not distinguished from the crowd by birth alone, but by taste and genius. They assumed a more elevated character than the generality of Germans; they seemed to be inspired by a nobler soul. A more generous vein discovered itself in their bosoms. Elegance and lofty decency made their appearance in them, and an illustrious nature appeared to view, which never marked the conduct of the low and illiterate. Hence, from the moment I had the good fortune to form one of their suite, my real nature took the lead, and my taste assumed its honest rights. It covered me with polished accomplishments; it wrapped me in the golden visions of poetry and music; it charmed me with the new ideas of beauty and grandeur.

These were the natural passions that

lay hid, and now broke forth to view, when the pressure was taken off, that bent down the slave, and chained his attention to the wilds of Switzerland. The appetite of beauty lies always in the mind, ready to direct us to finer prospects. Long astray upon a barren heath, amongst miserable villagers, my infant years almost forgotten, and my thoughts wholly taken up by my neglected circumstances, I at length discovered, and was received into a court of grandeur, pleasure, and power. Taste found me in this manner a forlorn outcast; she stripped me of my rudeness and led me to scenes and prospects where all was beautiful, and all was familiar.

Another and principal advantage I received from my residence at the Court of Maestricht, was a daily intercourse with some of the most interesting and accomplished women of the times. I am acquainted with no joy and no improvement so gratifying as that which a youth of great sensibility and warmth of imagina-

tion derives from an intimate converse with superior women ; and I can safely aver, that I never associated with any highly-gifted, or particularly charming woman, but I felt myself better and happier after such an agreeable collision. I had a right to claim an extraordinary portion of these blessings in the family of Hesse. Independently of my joining in every party of pleasure, I instructed all the ladies of the court in the English language and general literature. Of those ladies, my intercourse with one, who was the principal companion of the princess, was much more constant than with any other personages of the court. She was truly an interesting girl. She possessed none of the fading charms of her sex : she was not remarkably beautiful, but her countenance shone in an expression that very far surpassed all exterior beauty. I never saw so much ardour and vehemence of imagination beam from any eyes as from those of this

young woman. Her soul lighted her countenance with the most animated glow of intellect, and she seemed to be endued with an uncommon degree of sensibility; which, happily for her, appeared not to have been injured by an improper education. So much genuine modesty, simplicity, and truth, added to all the softness of delicacy, were marked in every word and action of this elegant girl, that I was very proud of her as a pupil, and very happy in her society.

In the course of my abode at the court of her serene mistress, I had an opportunity of rendering some essential service to this interesting creature. Calumny was at work to injure her in the eyes of the prince. But as I was acquainted both with the authors and the motives of the calumny, I was resolved on using the utmost means in my power to rescue the injured fair one from that disgrace to which she would otherwise have been infallibly reduced. I interested myself

with such ardour in the cause, and displayed the truth so much to the satisfaction of his serene highness, that he not only re-instated her in his esteem, and her own good name, but obtained ample apologies from those who had so deeply injured her.

During the whole of the transaction, the lady, whose name was Angelica Brunswick Oels, had never made her appearance. This circumstance arose partly from her delicacy, and partly from the fear of being observed by the original calumniators of her innocence and fame. But having received so great a favour, as she conceived, from me, she was desirous of thanking me in person for the important services I had rendered her.

This desire was no sooner made known to me, than I embraced so fair an opportunity of being introduced to a particular interview with a lady, of whom I had already formed so high an idea. A tire-woman, who was sent to guide me to

her presence, conducted me in silence through a vast number of those dark, winding, and intricate passages, so frequent in all the German houses of any distinction. We at length arrived at a saloon, most sumptuously adorned, and elegantly furnished, with fine-wrought carpets, splendid sofas, and the most valuable antique paintings. I had scarcely entered, when sounds of the most delightful music I had ever heard gradually swelled upon my ear. They rose from an adjoining apartment; and as the dying cadences of their silvery tones languished into a pause, the deeper swell of the human voice soared aloft, and bore my delighted soul on the wings of an enraptured imagination, to the mansions of eternal bliss.

As the music ceased, Angelica, richly dressed and closely veiled, entered the apartment, where I stood as if in a state of enchantment. Her form was of the most exquisite mould, and all her motions

so thrillingly graceful and elegant, that I naturally felt the palpitation of heart and general tremor which at once denotes the rising passions of the love-influenced soul.—Grateful for the benefits she had so recently received from me, she scrupled not to pour forth the genuine effusions of her heart, and thanked me in terms the most flattering to my feelings.—I was so enamoured of her inviting person, her lively and intellectual manners, and so mistaken in the motives of her conduct, that I could not resist the utterance of many soft and tender epithets of love, which the superior Germans always mingle in their conversation with the fair sex.

Angelica did not, as is usual with females, affect an ignorance of my meaning, but, with the most engaging freedom of manner, assured me that she valued my esteem in a very high degree, and wished so much to evince her own friendship for me, that she had sent for me, for the distinct purpose of pointing out to me the

means of rising out of mediocrity, and thereby qualifying me to offer my affections publicly to any lady of the court. "My near relative, the Duke of Brunswick," continued she, "is proceeding with an army against France. If your soul is above servitude; if you aspire to military fame, and to the hand of *any* distinguished woman, take this letter, and be assured you will one day return with pride and honour to the court." Saying these words, she presented me with a very valuable diamond ring. I pressed her hand in the most empassioned manner to my lips, declared that no circumstance, however powerful, should prevent me from pursuing the path of glory she had pointed out, and took a most respectful and grateful leave.

Generosity covers almost all other defects, and raises a blaze around them, in which they disappear and are lost. Like sovereign beauty, it makes a short cut to our affections; it wins our hearts without

resistance or delay, and unites all the world to favour and support its designs.

My gratitude to the illustrious Angelica was such, that I instantly assumed a nature deserving the opinion, as much as lay in my power, of so highly honourable and elegant a mind. It is true, I had imagined that the affair was taking the features of a court intrigue, but when she so firmly convinced me that she preferred my glory and prosperity to every other consideration upon earth, she devoted me irrevocably to her interests, and I burned, not with a sensual, but religious zeal, to signalize myself, and to obtain that rank at court, to which I was not entitled from the situation I then held.

It is also true, that my aspiring genius and strong passions were ill-calculated to allow me to grovel on in obscurity, and I had early in life regarded the profession of arms as the most likely to call forth the powers of a youth born with a lofty and enterprizing spirit. I had often sighed in

secret for an opportunity of engaging in a military capacity, and now such an opportunity was offered to me. I declared my wish to the Prince of Hesse, and in no long time took my affectionate leave of his most amiable and enlightened family.

I joined the Duke of Brunswick directly at the period he was about to rescue France from the grasp of usurpation, and carry war to the very gates of the capital. He received me very kindly; read the letter of Angelica with attention, and gave me the immediate appointment of a lieutenancy in the regiment of Brunswick, with a promise of preferment in proportion to my military conduct and capacity.—This campaign turned out an unfortunate one, presenting more sources of disgrace and misery, than of fame, preferment, and glory.

It is commonly supposed that the presumption, or ignorance of the duke was the spring or origin of this romantic undertaking. There is no greater error. It

is to a high and honourable spirit, that his conduct is to be attributed. He it was who first advised the grand idea of a general confederation against France. He was moved to it by the melancholy sufferings of the emigrants, and a hope that, by marching rapidly into France, he should suppress the designs of the treasonable, and bring effectual succour to the cause of the royalists. He also thought, that while France was lacerated by internal divisions, and the hand of every man was armed against his brother, this deplorable scene could only be brought to a conclusion by an armed mediator, and that, if a sufficient force were seen under the walls of Paris, discord would cease, and France herself would again prosper and be happy. These views were correct, but they were rendered abortive, both by the moral depravity of the French, and by an ill-timed and contradictory manifesto, issued by order of the Court of Berlin, and adverse to the private sentiments of my illustrious commander.

However, notwithstanding the general disgrace which attended our expedition, it was the cause of some individual fame and preferment. Among others, I had the good fortune to be noticed by my general; to be appointed captain in the Brunswickers, on the plains of Champagne, and to retreat from France with the distinguished and partial title of aid-de-camp to his serene highness. At the same lamentable period of a forced retreat, my regiment was ordered to garrison the town of Maestricht. Happy event! I soon appeared in the presence of the generous Angelica, arrayed in all the regimental foppery of military pomp, and almost daring to attempt the conquest of so fair a kingdom.

CHAP. XXIII.

Maestricht is besieged.—He shews a lofty and enterprising Spirit.—It wins for him the Affections of Angelica.—She proposes to promote, and next to marry him.—Disgusted with the Prussian Service, he accepts a Commission in the Rangers, commanded by the Hon. G. H. Ramsay.

GRANDEUR of soul, fortitude, and a resolution that haughtily struggles with fate, and will neither yield to nor make terms with misfortunes; which, through every situation, reposes a noble confidence in itself, and has an immoveable view to future glory and honour, astonishes the world with admiration and delight.

We, as it were, lean forward with surprise and trembling joy to behold the human soul collecting its strength, and asserting its right to superior destinies. When we leave man out of our account, and view the whole visible creation be-

side, we indeed see several traces of grandeur and unspeakable power, amidst the intermixture of a rich scenery of beauty; yet still the whole appears to be but a solemn absurdity, and to have a littleness and insignificancy. But when we restore man to the prospect, and put him at the head of it, endowed with genius and an immortal soul; when we give him a passion for truth, boundless views that spread along through eternity, and a fortitude that struggles with despair, and yields not to misfortune, then the skies, the ocean, and the earth, take the stamp of worth and dignity from the noble inhabitant whose purposes they serve.

A mind, fraught with these virtues, was now required by me, and every other officer of the garrison of Maestricht. Our defeat in Champagne had inspired the French with an arrogance that knew no bounds, and they left their own frontiers with the impious design of overturning

the altars, and trampling on the thrones of every neighbouring state. Brabant and Flanders were the first theatres of their sanguinary deeds; and as they advanced to the siege of Maestricht, their conduct was dreadful in the extreme. They fought to murder, they conquered to destroy. Liberty, the most chastened, fled at their approach, and death attended all their victories. No age, no sex, no condition was spared. The wife, weeping for her butchered husband, and embracing her helpless children, was pierced with them, and perished by the same blow. The old, the young, the vigorous, and the infirm, underwent the same fate, and were confounded in one common ruin.

In vain did flight save from the first assault: destruction was every where let loose, and met the hunted victims at every turn. In vain was recourse had to contrition, to repentance, to tears; for death was every where seen to be dealt,

although protection was expected when implored. But death was the slightest punishment inflicted by the French. All the tortures which wanton cruelty could devise; all the lingering pains of body, the anguish of mind, and the agonies of despair, were inflicted; and they zealously strove to shew a love of liberty, by the commission of enormities, for which depraved nature and perverted religion have hardly left a precedent or a name.

Flushed with blood and conquest, these Gallic demons approached the walls of Maestricht, and summoned us to surrender under pain of every man being put to the sword. The reply of the governor was worthy of the house of Hesse, and nothing was heard soon after but the roaring of cannon, the bursting of bombs, and the lamentations of the women, for the loss of those who were slain or wounded in the houses or streets. During the siege, we made several vigorous

sorties, one of the most successful of which it was my good fortune to command. On the following day I had to mount guard at the palace. As I entered this splendid scene of my former servitude and enchantment, I beheld in the upper hall the exquisitely amiable Angelica, reclining in a pensive melancholy attitude upon a sofa. I had never seen her but in public since the day she honoured me with a private interview, for the purpose of exciting my ambition, and pushing my fortunes in the army.

I advanced towards her, and was pressing her hand tenderly to my lips, when she rose and told me that she never ceased to felicitate herself on having recommended me to a station, the duties of which, she was informed, I filled with the utmost spirit and gallantry. As she uttered these words, her beauteous face was rendered fascinating by an oppression of sentiment, which she vainly endeavoured to conceal. Her golden tresses

too played in flowery ringlets down her slender waist, and wantoned over her snowy bosom more sweet than Scythian musk. Not heaven's pure ether displayed so bright an azure as shone in the clear lustre of her love-kindling eyes, which darted soft lightning upon me, though yet humid with recent tears. She breathed a fragrance more sweet than kindliest summer's air. Her lips moved in enchanting and heaven-born smiles; while her timid breast swelled through the thin transparent gauze, which loosely veiled those hidden treasures now heaving with the silent throbs of a former kindled flame.

In the sweet accents of a melodious voice, she begged me to remain, and not be disappointed by the absence of my illustrious friend the princess, for, since the siege, she seldom left the nursery, fearing every moment that some fatal bomb would light upon the palace, and crush to pieces her dear helpless infants.

"But she knows that you have the command of the palace-guard to-day," said Angelica, "and she told me I must strive to entertain you in her absence." Saying this, she took me by the hand, and led me towards the couch from which she had just risen, telling me in language more sweet than ever was sung by Italian nymph, that she hoped my disappointment would not deprive her of the pleasure of my company. Not having dared to hope for this transporting freedom, I scarcely knew how to reply, but seated myself in silent rapture at her side, while she sought to sooth me with the most tender tokens of esteem, and by telling me that she believed the day was not far off, when, as she had prophesied, I might, without fear of rejection, express my sentiments of affection to any lady I valued about the court. All overpowered by love's potent charm, I clasped the amiable maid in my circling arms, and revealed, for the first time, to her, the in-

delible impression which she had so soon made upon my mind. As I uttered this confession, she had no reply immediately to make: she pressed my hand, her bosom gently heaved, her dazzled vision seemed veiled in dreams of never-failing bliss.

On coming to herself, she said she doubted not but that, after the siege, or in the course of another campaign, I should obtain a majority, and that I should then have her full consent to pay my addresses to her publicly, and to demand her hand of the prince, her guardian, if that object should remain my wish. Having assured her of my faith and implicit obedience, fast fled the happy hour, till the roaring of cannon called my attention abroad, and dissipated without ceremony or affection the fond and tender scene.

A mixture of the sublime considerably aids the idea of beauty, and heightens the horrors of disorder and ugliness. Personal beauty is vastly raised by a dignified air; on the contrary, the dissolution and

ruins of a large city distress the mind proportionably; but while we mourn over great ruins, and the destruction of our species, we are also soothed by the generous commiseration we feel in our own breasts, and therefore ruins give us the same kind of grateful melancholy we feel at a tragedy.

But of all the objects of discord and confusion, none is so shocking as a town besieged by a furious and unrelenting enemy. When we see the principle of religion and morality disordered; when we hear the impious thunder of man shaking the foundation of the highest spheres; when we behold the rockets, like stars, scattered over the heavens; when we attend to the cries of the people for their altars which are upset, for the houses which are burned, for the relatives which are destroyed, for the fields which are laid waste, and for the virgins which they fear to be violated, the horror is too high, and we feel no sensations but those of dismay and terror.

Without exactly intending it, I have sketched the precise situation of Maestricht, and the feelings of a population during a siege, which for violence of attack, and intrepidity of resistance, has no parallel in the annals of military history. In the midst of the disorder and confusion of this tremendous siege, when each lofty steeple was tottering on its mutilated base, and the mind viewing the effects of boundless power with still amazement, the siege was suddenly raised by the approach of the Austrians; and the unavoidable transition, which the mind made from the effect to the cause, forced it to recoil upon itself in joy, rapture, and a sublime idea of divine interposition.

These passions had scarcely subsided, when a portion of the garrison, to which I was attached, set out immediately with renewed vigour in pursuit of the enemy. I departed without taking any other leave of Angelica, than telling her that my affections should experience no decay in ab-

sence: that I would fight with desperation to merit my majority, and that death alone or her hand could put an end to my anxiety. Vain delusions of man! I served with the Brunswickers for a considerable time, and had the good fortune to signalize myself on various memorable occasions, but I always felt that the intruded influence of some titled rival impeded my way to preferment, and that a majority in the Prussian service was a rank I was never likely to obtain.

This conviction was strengthened by the defection of the king from the great cause, and by the return of our troops to Maestricht, there to remain in a shameful inactivity, politically called neutrality of arms. Nothing could be more adverse either to my ambition or to my affection, than these pusillanimous measures; for Angelica herself having named a majority as essential if I aspired to her hand, I resolved, in the pride of heart, never to seek the felicity till that distant

rank was previously secured. Hence our love appeared to degenerate into an ordinary intimacy, though our souls acknowledged an elevation and enthusiasm that do not attend on common or cold ideas.

In this state of things, the Honourable Lieutenant Colonel George William Ramsay arrived at Maestricht with a letter of service from his Royal Highness the Duke of York, directing him to raise a regiment of infantry on the continent, and appoint to it such officers as he might think fit. The regiment was to be called the York Rangers, and, in proportion as its companies were formed, they were to join the troops of his Royal Highness, which had but recently separated from the allied army, after the taking of Valenciennes, and were on their march to lay siege to the town of Dunkirk. Colonel Ramsay had sufficient penetration to discover how qualified I was to assist his views: he,

therefore, proffered me a company in his regiment, and finally prevailed upon me to abandon the Brunswickers; so that I once more ranged myself with him, under the standard of my good old sovereign and master.

CHAP. XXIV.

He joins the Duke of York's Army before Dunkirk.—Fights like a Knight-Errant.—Dreams of Promotion.—Receives two Wounds, and is sent to the Hospital.—He recovers, and returns Home.—Goes into the Cheshire Fencibles.—Gets involved in the Recruiting Service.—Flies to Portugal for fear of Arrest.—Looks to Corsica, and again hopes.

KNIGHT-ERRANTRY is a kind of delusion, which, though it be fictitious in fact, yet is true in sentiment. There are few people, who in their youth, before they are corrupted by the commerce of the world, are not knight-errants or princesses in their hearts.

The soul, in an enthusiastic ecstasy, communicates a flame to words which they have not; and poetry, by its quick transitions, bold figures, lively images, and the variety of efforts to paint the latent rapture, bears witness, that the confused ideas of the mind are still infi-

nitely superior, and beyond the reach of all description. It is this divine spirit that, when roused from its lethargy, breathes in noble sentiments, that charms in elegance, that stamps upon marble or canvas the figures of gods and heroes, that inspires them with an air above humanity, and leads the soul through the enchanting meanders of music in a waking vision, through which it cannot break to discover the near objects which charm it.

Be the above true or false philosophy, sure I am that no man was ever endowed with more of the enthusiastic spirit of genuine knight-errantry, than I was in removing from the Prussian to his Britannic majesty's service. As on a former occasion, every act referred to the wished-for end. The gradations of rank diminished, and in the perspective of hope were to be seen, Angelica at the head, and a long train of gilded and endless enjoyments. Actuated by this spirit,

and with these views, assisted also by some flattering popularity in the German states, I completed my company in less than one month, and joined his Royal Highness the Duke of York, at the moment he was drawing his lines of circumvallation around the walls of Dunkirk. An out-post of danger was immediately assigned to me, and I waited with anxiety for the fruition of those splendid hopes, which filled my bosom in the height of my knight-errantry.

When a nation is much corrupted; when avarice and a love of gain have seized upon the hearts of men; when the gentry ignominiously bend their necks to corruption and bribery, or enter into the base mysteries of gaming; then bravery, elevated principles, and greatness of soul expire, and all that remains is a comedy, or puppet-shew of patriotism, in which the dancing-master and the prince are upon a level, and the mind is understood to have no part in the drama

of warfare, or else to act under a mean disguise of virtues, which it is not possessed of. This was nearly the situation of England at the breaking out of the war, and to this humiliating situation it is owing that we failed in our attempt upon Dunkirk. Although we seemed to possess powers superior to the rest of mankind, and to display a pomp of military genius that never appeared before in the science of a siege, we had suddenly to fly, like wild beasts pursued, and turn all our attention to the necessaries required by exhausted strength, by cold, and by hunger.

For myself individually, I was for a considerable time insensible to the general distress and ignominy. Neither did I suffer from the privations common to the bulk of the army. On the morning of the retreat I received two wounds, of so desperate a nature, that I was cast into a commissary's waggon, and remained in a state of impotent stupefaction,

till I was restored to my strength and senses in an hospital at Bruges, where I was left with but little hopes of my recovery.

No situation, however calamitous, can quench the enthusiastic ardour of the visionary; for, as he feels strongly, he still hopes, and rushes to snatch into view another grand prospect.

The variety of his efforts shews the object, which the mind labours with, to be different from any thing we know; to be beyond the power of utterance; and yet the very labour and confusion of images, and the anxiety he betrays, paint sufficiently his perceptions; and we are sensible of what he cannot express, because we all feel it in our own bosoms.

In like manner I cannot express what I felt, although the reader may conceive what I should feel, when I awoke to life and recollection, and discovered my situation. I had apparently every thing to deprecate and nothing to hope. But

I was not born to sink under calamities. On the approach of the French, I left the hospital, sick as I was, took the road for Bremen on foot, and, after a detention there of two months, from indisposition and fatigue, embarked for England with the full expectation of obtaining a majority, and of being enabled to realize, at no distant period, my former views of domestic happiness in the arms of the ever-beloved Angelica.

Occupied with these pleasing visions, I arrived in London, presented myself at the Horse-Guards, and was awoke, as if by a clap of thunder, from all my delightful reveries. The returning officer reported me as killed in the retreat from Dunkirk, and, as all the commissions were filled up by the king since that unhappy event, I not only lost the chance of a majority, but the company for which I had fought and bled. Nor had I any remedy; for as the York Rangers, during my service in that corps, acted only

under a letter of permission from his Royal Highness the Duke of York, none of the officers' commissions were signed by the king; therefore it could not rank as a regiment, giving claim to its officers, nor could I demand as a right from the father what I only held through the courtesy of the son. It is also true that I had no friend in London to back my memorials, and that, smarting under grievances supposed as well as real, I employed a language in my remonstrances which made them disgust and fail.

Scarcely was I emancipated from the despair occasioned by my reception at the Horse-Guards, before I met, at the house of a most amiable woman at Blackheath, Mrs. Horsfall, a Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the Cheshire Fencibles. He heard my story with pity and admiration, introduced me to Colonel Courtenay of the same regiment, and obtained for me, from that gentleman, a letter of service to raise men, which, if attended

with success, would undoubtedly introduce me to a majority. In consequence, I went down to Chester, and took a recruiting party with me into North and South Wales.

This kind of life had its pleasures for a time, but it soon became dangerous and insipid. Men were with great difficulty to be obtained; and of those that were obtained, one-third deserted, leaving me involved in debt to the amount of the bounty they had individually received. Hence, at the expiration of seven months, instead of the promised majority, Mr. Lawrie, the agent, sent me back my protested bill, stopped my pay, and hurt my credit so much at Abergavenny, where I was recruiting, that I suddenly threw up my commission, and left the kingdom, to avoid the consequences of the debts I had so unfortunately incurred.

The country I went to was Portugal. On my landing at Lisbon, I possessed

but ten pounds in the world; nor had I a single friend, or letter of recommendation to procure one of any sort. For a short time I felt that dreadful complaint, despondency, which renders life itself a burthen, which turns black the light of the sun, and defaces all the beauties of nature. While in this depressed state, I thought that all creation was to me a perfect blank—that neither man nor woman delighted me; that I was a blot upon the face of the earth; and that, if my present feelings continued, I cared not how soon I was removed.

This despondency was not of long continuance. An object soon presented itself, which awakened all my ambition, and revived my hopes. Corsica had just at this period fallen into the possession of the English, and the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Gilbert Elliot, had instructions to form an establishment there, civil and military, on a very grand and extentive scale. It immediately

struck me that Corsica was the only proper theatre for me to appear at, under my existing circumstances, and I therefore resolved to proceed to that settlement, notwithstanding the want of introductory letters, and the absence of sufficient funds.

END OF VOL. I.

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